MARVEL COMICS

OFFICIAL MARVEL ZOMBIE MAGAZINE!

MARVEL AGE

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$1.00 US
$1.25 CAN
99
APR
UK 60p

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AUTHORITY

THE BLACK PANTHER RETURNS

BY DON McGREGOR AND DWAYNE TURNER!

SPECIAL 7-PAGE PREVIEW OF THE INFINITY GAUNTLET BY JIM STARLIN AND GEORGE PEREZ!

PLUS:

MARVEL TAKES ON THE TERMINATOR!

MARK GRUENWALD REVEALS THE METHOD TO MARVEL'S CONVENTION MADNESS!

FRED HEMBECK VS. THANOS!

SING-ALONG WITH MARVEL! COMPLETE LYRICS TO THE MARVEL CARTOON SHOWS!

D. TURNER

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SALICRUP'S SECTION

Despite editing MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE for over seven years, I'm still introduced to folks as the Spider-Man editor. (Even though I've given up editing THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN and WEB OF SPIDER-MAN, I still edit the relatively new SPIDER-MAN, so technically I'm still the Spider-Man editor.) Well, believe it or not, I used to edit the AVENGERS back in the days it was drawn by George Perez. In fact, I was George's last editor before he decided to devote himself to our Distinguished Competition. Even back then I knew that sooner or later that George would be back. Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that George has come crawling back to Marvel on his hands and knees begging for any assignment he can grab. Quite the opposite. George has achieved such significant success on his own that he could work anywhere he so desired. I bet that the majority of his fans have no idea that George ever worked for mighty Marvel. So, as far as careers go, we need George Perez far more than he needs us.

So why was I so sure that George would be back? That's easy. George loves comics. Especially super hero comics. One of the reasons George left Marvel in the first place is that he had drawn most of Marvel's top characters and DC was offering him a shot at their pantheon of superstars.

I suspect that the opportunity to draw just about every super hero in the Marvel Universe played a role in getting George back, 'cause George lives for projects like "THE INFINITY GAUNTLET." He simply loves super heroes and that love manifests itself in George's work by making sure each and every character seems unique. George breathes life into his characters, making them as real as your best friends. George knows these characters well, knows how they move, how they fight, how they use their powers, how they interact with others, and he can convey their emotions brilliantly. There's nothing generic about George's super heroes.

So George came back later instead of sooner, the important thing is that he's back and I for one couldn't be happier. Welcome back to the Marvel Universe, George, we missed you!

—Jim Salicrup

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STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION
(REQUIRED BY 39 U.S.C. 3685)

1. Title of Publication: MARVEL AGE
1B. Publication No.: 8750-4367
2. Date of Filing: October 1, 1990.
3. Frequency of Issue: MONTHLY.
3A. No. of Issues published annually: 12.
3B. Annual subscription price: $12.00 U.S.; $17.00 Canada $24.00 Foreign
4. Complete mailing address of known office of publication: Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc., 387 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10016.
5. Complete address of the headquarters of general business offices of the publisher: 387 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10016.
6. Full names and complete mailing address of publisher, editor, and managing editor: Stan Lee, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10016. Editor: Tom DeFalco, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10016. Managing Editor: Tom DeFalco, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10016.
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8. Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities: Ronald O. Perelman, 36 East 63rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10021.
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10. EXTENT AND NATURE OF CIRCULATION.
A. Total No. Copies Printed (net press run): Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 140,497 Single issue nearest to filing date: 170,079
B. Paid Circulation: 1) Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales: Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 95,466 Single issue nearest to filing date: 98,100. 2) Mail subscriptions: Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 1,212. Single issue nearest to filing date: 900.
C. Total Paid Circulation: (Sum of 10B1 and 10B2): Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 96,678. Single issue nearest to filing date: 99,000.
D. Free Distribution by mail, carrier, or other means, samples, complimentary, and other free copies: Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 100. Single issue nearest to filing date: 100.
E. Total Distribution: (Sum of C and D): Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 96,778. Single issue nearest to filing date: 99,100.
F. Copies Not Distributed: 1) Office use, left-over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing: Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 600. Single issue nearest to filing date: 600. 2) Returns from News Agents: Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 43,119. Single issue nearest to filing date: 70,379
G. Total (Sum of E, F1 and 2 should equal net press run shown in A): Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 140,497. Single issue nearest to filing date: 170,079.
11. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.
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MARVEL AGE® Vol. 1, No. 99, April, 1991. (ISSN #8750-4367) Published by MARVEL COMICS, Terry Stewart, President; Stan Lee, Publisher; Michael Hobson, Group Vice President, Publishing. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. **SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, N.Y. AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES.** Published monthly. Copyright © 1991 by Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. All rights reserved. Price $1.00 per copy in the U.S. and $1.25 in Canada. Subscription rate for 12 issues: $12.00 U.S.; $17.00 Canada; and $24.00 foreign. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the condition that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. MARVEL AGE (including all MARVEL titles and prominent MARVEL characters featured in this issue and the distinctive likenesses thereof) is a trademark of MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, INC. **POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO MARVEL AGE, c/o MARVEL COMICS, 9TH FLOOR, 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016.** Printed in the U.S.A.

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ITEM! He promised he'd be back—and now he is! He's Arnold Schwarzenegger as the Terminator, and he's coming your way this summer both on the silver screen and in our thrilling comics adaptation.

The sequel is called TERMINATOR 2: JUDGMENT DAY, and it boasts many of the people who made the first TERMINATOR the surprise hit of the eighties. Arnie is back, of course, in the role that made him a star, and Linda Hamilton returns as the feisty Sarah Connor. James Cameron returns to direct the sequel, which he co-wrote with William Wisher.

The comic adaptation will be released in a number of different formats. The writer for the adaptation is Gregory Wright (who adapted last summer's smash, ROBOCOP 2), and the pencils will be by Klaus Janson, who may handle the inking honors, as well.

We can't give away anything about

the plot to TERMINATOR 2 at this time, but we will say this: rumor has it that Arnie plays not one, but *two* Terminators in this one!

ITEM! It's March as you read this, but here at Mighty Marvel we've just finished celebrating Christmas! On January 4 of this year, we held our annual Too Late For Christmas and New Year's/Too soon for Ground Hog's Day Party to ring in the new year. The party was held at the world-famous Players' Club in New York City, and valuable prizes were given away to many Marvel staffers chosen at random. The big winners: Assistant Editor Suzanne Gaffney, Phil Sheehy from the Repro Dept., John Galvin from our mail room, Epic Executive Editor, Carl Potts, and Sven Larsen from our Sales Department.

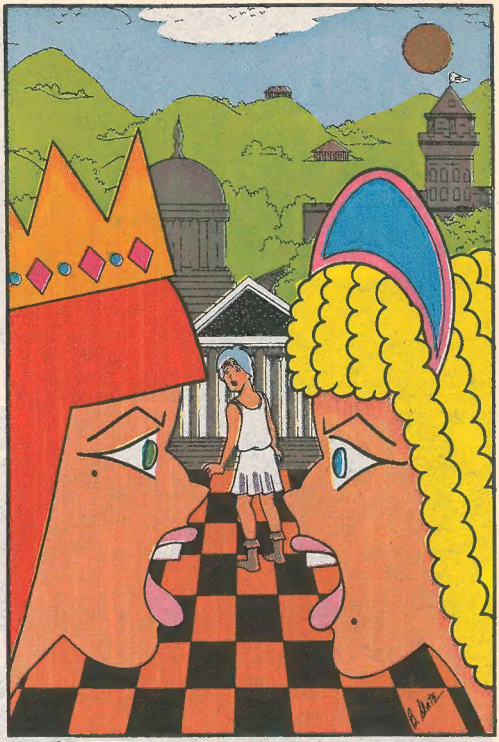
Among the prizes was a CD player, a free dinner for four at a fancy restaurant, a free cruise for four around Manhattan, and a week's paid vacation! A splendid time was had by all. There was plenty to eat and drink, and dancing till all hours of the night (or at least till 10:00, when the festivities came to an end for another year).

The big shock of the evening came when editor Mike Rockwitz, assistant editor-on-leave Michael Heisler, and colorist Steve Buccellato, showed up in rented tuxedos. Those of us who are used to seeing those three wise guys in their regular togs were quite startled. But the three gents were the hit of the party, dazzling all the ladies, and amazing everyone with their fancy footwork.

The most pleasant surprise of all was that Spider-Man, the Hulk, and Captain America showed up! Generally our heroes are too busy crime-fighting to attend our parties, but this year, we were thrilled to be joined by three of the best. At least Wolverine didn't show up—you know how he gets when he doesn't win any prizes!

ITEM! How do I get to Yancy Street? This is a common question heard around the Marvel Bullpen these days. In the past, newcomers to the Marvel offices have had occasional trouble finding their way around. Now those days are over! Thanks primarily to the efforts of Howard Mackie, Bobbie Chase, Bob Budiansky, and Mark Gruenwald, every corridor on the editorial floor at Marvel now has a name. Special plaques were hung in each hallway, to clearly identify it by name. This was done to make it easier for freelancers and other visitors to find their ways around the hallowed halls of Mighty Marvel.

Among the hallway names: *Peter Parkway, Avenue of the Avengers, Editors' Row, the Rainbow Bridge, the Negative Zone,* and *Limbo.* The only question we still have is one that's been plaguing us for years: just how the heck *do* you get to Sesame Street?



Barbara Slate's SWEET XVI

ITEM! Oops! We goofed! (Imagine that!) No, we're not talking about the time we named Tom Morgan as the new penciler on SHIELD when, as we all know, it's actually Jackson Guice who's currently handling those honors. Yes, that was a major goof, which we do regret, but that's not the one we're here to apologize for today.

A few months back, we broke the big story on THE INFINITY GAUNTLET, the forthcoming 6-issue monthly limited series by Jim Starlin and George Perez. We had our crack team of topnotch investigators on the case, and yet they still let a little error slip in.

It seems INFINITY GAUNTLET will not be Bookshelf Format, as originally reported. Editor Craig Anderson informs us that INFINITY GAUNTLET will be printed on high-quality Mando paper, and each issue will be, as Craig put it, "48 action-packed (and we do mean packed) pages!"

Sorry about the slip-up, Craig! Even with our team of researchers working 'round the clock, occasional errors do slip into MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE. (Maybe if those guys would stop working around the clock and start working on this magazine, we wouldn't have this problem!)

For the complete story on INFINITY GAUNTLET, see our story on page 20.

ITEM! Remember what it was like to be sixteen? Remember what it was like to live in ancient Rome? No? Well, now you can find out!

SWEET XVI is the latest project from writer/artist Barbara Slate, who is perhaps best known for her two YUPPIES FROM HELL books, and her work on the BARBIE titles. SWEET XVI is the story of Cornelia, a 16-year-old princess, her best friend Aria, a slave girl, and the man who loves them both, Antony, who works in his parents' pottery shop. This six-issue series is

set in ancient Rome, but as Barbara noted, "16-year-old girls then have the same feelings as girls in this century."

The concept for SWEET XVI was created by several Marvel staffers a few years back. Barbara had just finished the first YUPPIES FROM HELL book, and was talking with then-editor Sid Jacobson about other projects she could do. Sid offered her SWEET XVI, and the rest, as they say, is ancient history. Barbara says she has "no background in history," so the project presented a "tremendous" challenge to her. "I spent a lot of time in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, checking out the exhibits on ancient Rome and Egypt."

Barbara promised that SWEET XVI will offer "a little bit of everything—love, humor and a lot of adventure. . . ." As an example of the latter, Barbara cited a story where a sheep farmer is accidently invited to Cornelia's sweet 16 party, and the escapades begin. Although SWEET XVI is intended for girls, Barbara feels that "boys will want to read it, too." Barbara feels that SWEET XVI will be most enjoyed by those in the 10 to 16-year-old range. But we're sure SWEET XVI will provide fun for all ages!

So let's all take a Roman holiday and remember what it was like to be sixteen again!

ITEM! How come you never do a comic about the bad guys?

This is a question we are often asked at conventions and in fan letters. Well, now you need ask no more! It's time to bring on the bad guys!

THE DEADLY FOES OF SPIDER-MAN is a 4-issue mini-series beginning next month. The series is written by Danny Fingeroth, with art by Kerry Gammill, Al Milgrom, and Mike Machlan. According to editor Terry Kavanagh, the limited series "focuses on the foes of Spider-Man, though Spider-Man is in it, too." The foes of the title are: the Beetle, Hydro-Man, Boomerang, the Rhino, and the Speed Demon.

Terry said DEADLY FOES tells the story "from the villain's perspective. Spider-Man is viewed as a villain by them—he's constantly getting in their way." The head villain in the story is the Beetle, who has a secret agenda involving the Kingpin. A mysterious woman in the series is Lila, who works as a getaway driver for the bad guys, and who also has a secret agenda of her own.

In the course of the story, we get to follow a villain through the legal system, as the Beetle is captured by Spidey, goes on trial, goes to jail, and is busted out. The DEADLY FOES OF SPIDER-MAN was actually initiated by editor Michael Higgins for MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS a few years back, as a challenge to Danny Fingeroth to do a Spider-Man story from the villains' point of view.

As Terry put it, "for the first time, we get to follow a villain through the criminal process!" We say it's about time the villains had their moment in the sun! They've worked hard for it, and they deserve it! Concluded Terry, "It's great! You'll love it! Buy it!"

TOP TEN LIST

A listener writes, "Dear Casey, Three years ago while I was on vacation in Tijuana, I met a girl named Tami. She was blonde and beautiful, everything that I look for in a girl. She invited me to come visit her at her home in Las Vegas, and so I flew out to spend a weekend with her. We kept in touch after that, but somehow never seemed to get back together. Then this past Christmas, I received a phone call from Tami. She said she wanted to fly out to visit me. I couldn't believe it. I hadn't seen her in three years. She arrived just after Christmas, and we had five great days together. Now she's back home in Vegas again. I really miss her a lot. I don't know if I'll ever see Tami again, but I'll never forget the times we had together. I would appreciate it if you could play for me now, 'You're the Best Thing That Ever Happened to Me' By Gladys Knight and the Pips. Signed, B.D. from Westfield, NJ."

Well, B.D., we'd love to play that song for you, but this is, of course, a comic book and not a radio station, so it's not possible for us to play any songs for you. Instead, though, we've got something even better! We're going to list the Top Ten best-selling Marvel Comics in the Direct Sales Market for the month of September, 1990, as compiled by the lady we'd all like to send a long-distance dedication to, our erst-while Vice President/Direct Sales, Carol Kalish.

1. SPIDER-MAN #4
2. X-MEN #270
3. AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #341
4. X-FACTOR #60
5. NEW MUTANTS #95
6. WOLVERINE #33
7. GHOST RIDER #7
8. PUNISHER #42
9. PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL #24
10. EXCALIBUR #31

MARVEL® TRIVIA QUIZ

There was no real hype about the first appearance of the Black Panther —he seemed just one of the many things that made FANTASTIC FOUR "the world's greatest comics magazine!" There was no trumpeting of the character as Marvel's premiere black super hero, or of the subtle change in consciousness that his popularity would bring to comics. And maybe that was part of the point: the Black Panther wasn't just a great black character, he was a great comics creation! While his new adventures continue the legend, let's examine T'Challa's past with these twelve trivia teasers, and check your answers with ours on page 32!

—Brian Nelson

1. Which enemy of the Panther nearly killed him while insanely quoting old Warner Bros. cartoons?
   A) Anton Pretorious
   B) Elmer "Sex and Violence" Gore
   C) Torvald "Coyote" Helmer
   D) Fred "Anchovies and Extra Cheese" Hembeck

2. When international incidents threatened to place Wakanda and South Africa at war, the Panther found himself battling what South African super-team?
   A) The Supremacists
   B) The Four Diamonds
   C) The National Force
   D) The Bay City Rollers

3. As recounted in MARVEL TEAM-UP, T'Challa came *this* close to a romantic relationship with which Marvel heroine?
   A) Shanna the She-Devil
   B) Tigra
   C) Storm
   D) Night Nurse

4. Which rarely seen young character is distantly related to T'Challa?
   A) Joshua Itboo
   B) Laura Dean
   C) Jim Wilson
   D) Rodney Allan Rippey

5. Which diminutive troublemaker traveled with the Panther in an attempt to trace bizarre artifacts?
   A) Mister Little
   B) Mister Small
   C) Mister Tiny
   D) Dr. Loveless

6. T'Challa went up against the KKK when he investigated the unsolved murder of:
   A) Kevin Trublood
   B) Angela Lynne
   C) Sombre
   D) Jimmy Hoffa

7. One of the Black Panther's most trusted friends, he served as Wakanda's Communications head:
   A) Taku
   B) W'kabi
   C) Mendinao
   D) Bryant Gumbel

8. This snake-charming antagonist fought against T'Challa as one of Erik Killmonger's recruits:
   A) Venomm
   B) Princess Python
   C) Swami Rihva
   D) Hadji

9. To maintain a connection to the real world while he fought with the Avengers, T'Challa assumed the identity of Luke Charles, who worked as a:
   A) social worker
   B) high school teacher
   C) director of a drug rehab clinic
   D) mild-mannered reporter for a great metropolitan newspaper

10. T'Challa discovered Daredevil's secret identity as a result of their encounter with:
   A) Starr Saxon
   B) Death's Head
   C) Thunderbolt
   D) transcendental meditation

11. Who nominated the Panther to replace him in the Avengers?
   A) Hawkeye
   B) Goliath
   C) Captain America
   D) Jarvis

12. Before he made his comics debut as the Black Panther T'Challa was almost named:
   A) Klaw
   B) The Black Leopard
   C) The Coal Tiger
   D) T'Chambakaakatambutelezikapata

epic-grams

THINGS CHANGE

Recently a wisely worded missive from Marvel/Epic President Terry Stewart set the offices abuzz with an announcement as exciting as it was astounding. We're running out of room. No ordinary shortage of space this, but a burning pronouncement of awe-inspiring Things To Come, and an acknowledgement that the much vaunted Epic Explosion is contagious, leaving both Epic and Marvel bursting at the seams. The duplex of developments is hot with a new crop of titanic titles, and a decidedly different dilemma: how do you get another pint of blood out of a dozen odd (and we do mean *odd*) editors who are already harried and hurried with the hassles of turning out books month in and month out, to do even *more* work? Or better yet, how many of them does it take to screw in a light bulb? But we digress.

Here's a hint: threats and intimidation won't work.

MORE THINGS CHANGE

Here's a solution: elevating a few hearty candidates from the rollicking ranks of assistant editors to mighty *managing editors!* And the first candidate-cum-victim is a name familiar to most Epic-epicureans: "Rock and Roll Girl" Marie Javins. We welcome her to the ranks of Epic editorial as the first full Epic managing editor, joining the surly-yet-silly like of managing editor Rob "Deeter" Tokar.

Marie is taking with her the editorial reins of some of Epic's top foreign projects, including AKIRA and the MOEBIUS Graphic Novels, as well as overseeing some exciting new projects like CAR WARRIORS and OLYMPIANS.

But of course, no change is without complications. Marie's added responsibility required a revision in relative range; an evaluation of alternative locales.

She'd need new digs.

MORE THINGS CHANGE MORE

Marie's "wall of cows" was the first casualty. It was nearly an all-day event, removing over six feet of portraits, paintings, sketches and scribbles of cows of every size, shape and variation. The artists ranged from Sergio Aragonés, to Ted McKeever, to Mike Mignola—a virtual smorgasbord of bovine beauty. And it all came down, to facilitate her move.

Epic editor Marc McLaurin, with whom she'd worked, had silent services after hours. No easy task was his, having to live with the fact that never more would a thousand horned heads be staring intently at the back of his head. . .

Replacing Marie, Marc raided the hallowed halls of MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE itself, absconding with MA's own Tom Dan much to the chagrin of editor Jumpin' Jim Salicrup. But such events are what help to keep Jim jumpin'.

As of this reporting, Tom has evidenced no strange affinities to any farm animals.

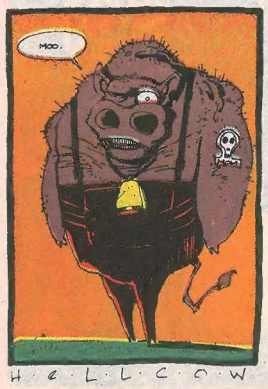
MORE THINGS CHANGE EVEN MORE

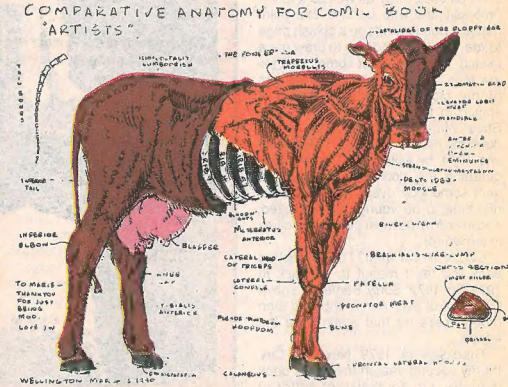
We'd also like to give printed congrats to the next candidate for elevation (or devolution, however you prefer to look at it) from assistant to managing editor, Renée Witterstaetter.

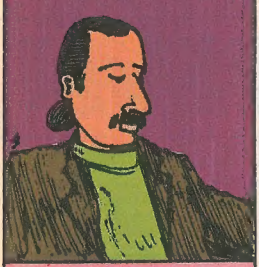
And last, we'd like to welcome aboard new staff book designer Joe Kaufman. We snatched Joe away from the cold caresses of Penguin Books, into the hot and heavy workaday world of funnies-that-aren't-so-funny. He comes to us with a furied fervor to make the Epic Explosion truly something to see, making sure our books look as hot outside as the passionate pages they envelop.

Look for these names as the new movers-and-shakers at Marvel/Epic. We'll sure be keeping an eye on them from this end!

That's it for this round of cataclysmic changes—be back here next month for a run-down on what's new—and what's old—in Epic's hilarious humor line!







MARK'S REMARKS

Convention season approaches. One of the things that has somehow passed into the province of my responsibility as Executive Editor is coming up with some special event programming for the major conventions Marvel attends. How I came to be in charge of this I don't know. Wait. Yes, I do. Watch out, folks, I feel a flashback coming on. (Cue the cascading harp music and distort my image at the top of this column along its vertical axis.)

Fourth of July. 1972. New York City. I'm attending my first comic convention, the grand-daddy of all "comicons" sponsored by the late, great Phil Seuling. It was my first trip to New York. I'd driven to Atlantic City with my parents so my dad could attend a National Education Association convention, and then took a bus on into the city. The NY convention was incredible. I got to meet some of my all-time idols such as Jack Kirby as well as a ton of professionals who up until that point had just been names on a splash page to me. I got Neal Adams to draw me a sketch. For free! I met some great fellow fans, including one who's still one of my closest friends (hi, Dave). I stayed in the seedy YMCA on 42nd Street but didn't get mugged. (A guy down the hall from me died, I discovered one night, by asking the cop who was guarding the door until the morgue sent somebody over.) This was a terrific time to be young, comic-crazed, and in one of the most dangerous cities in the world!

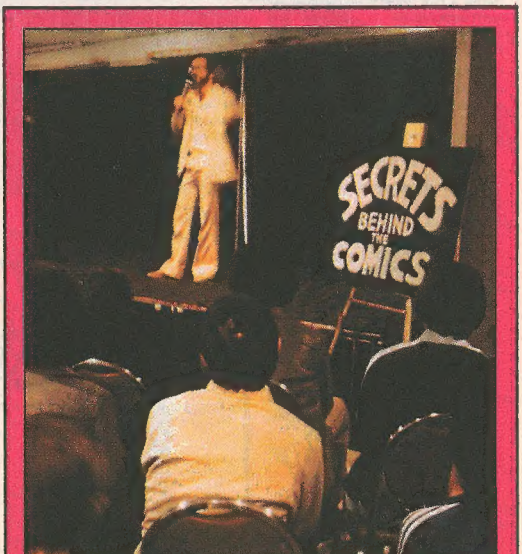
Ooops. Know what? I think I flashed back too far. I meant to go back to 1979, not 1972. Sorry. Some of us have less control over our flashbacks than others. Let's try that again. Cue the effects.

Thanksgiving. 1979. New York City. It's my second year in the comic book industry, I'm an assistant editor at Marvel, and I'm a novice writer doing MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE and SPIDER-WOMAN. A self-styled Young Turk, I was interested in making a name for myself. Having attended conventions for seven years now, their novelty had worn off to an extent, particularly now that I was in the business and saw all the big names in the industry all the time. On the other hand, I felt that convention programming was just not as exciting as it used to be. Somehow in conversation with fellow novice writer Steven Grant, we'd gotten the idea to package one hour entertainment events for the folks who run the Creation Conventions. Steve and I came up with three such events.

First, there was "The Plotting Game," sort of a dating game for wayward plot ideas from fans by way of The Gong Show. We drafted then-Marvel editor Roger Stern to host it, and Steve, Ralph Macchio, and I were the "celebrity" panelists. Fans would come up on stage one at a time, and have 3 minutes to tell us and the audience their plot idea. We would then give it a numerical score 1 to 10, like the Olympic judges. But if the plot idea was too bad to subject the audience to, we'd gong the poor guy offstage. Call it mercy killing. The contestant with the highest score won.

Second, there was "Pros and Cons," a comic industry version of The Hollywood Squares. There were nine celebrity guests arranged in three rows of three—we had Archie Goodwin, Denny O'Neil, Bill Sienkiewicz, Joe Rubinstein, Jo Duffy, Len Wein, Steve Skeates, John Byrne, and Frank Miller making up the grid. Two audience contestants would then compete playing tic-tac-toe. A contestant would choose a celebrity, the host—then-Marvel editor Rick Marschall—would ask him or her a question about somebody in the industry (like "What Marvel staffer earned his way through art school by posing as a semi-nude model?"), the celebrity would answer, and the contestant would have to decide if he or she was telling the truth or not. If he or she guessed right, he'd take the square; wrong, the opponent would take it. Three in a row in any direction would take the game.

Third, Steven and I did a —ahem— variety show called "Secrets Behind the Comics," after the 1950's Stan Lee book by the same name. The object of the hour was to 1) let the audience see various things they had never before seen at any comics convention, and 2) let Steve and me indulge our secret urges to avant garde performance artists. So what did we do to fill the hour? Various well-conceived, poorly executed comic performance pieces. Such as. . .interpretive dance and bongo percussion to a beat reading of SHO-



NEW YORK CITY, 1979 — Mark G. in nice bell bottoms.

SAN DIEGO, 1989 — Silly String goes wild for Mark G., Tom DeFalco and Fabian Nicieza.

GUN WARRIORS. . .a juggling exhibition while my then-girlfriend shaved off my beard (I was bleeding for days afterward). . .a "Scared Straight" diatribe trying to frighten the audience out of their desire to enter the comics industry. . .and the ever-popular fake assassination of me by an irate member of the audience.

We did each of these events at least twice at various conventions, some of them—"The Plotting Game" on at least five occasions. Then we stopped, and I did nothing like them for the next seven years. Why? Well, for one thing we weren't able to reach a satisfactory remuneration agreement with the convention people. For another, I was really bummed out when our most extravagant "Secrets" bit—a one-act play called "Beneath the Planet of the Fans"—had to be axed because we ran overtime. So much for weird con programming and me. So I thought.

1987. Early August. San Diego. Ralph Macchio and I are having breakfast, talking about the panel we're supposed to be on that afternoon. The convention programmers have entitled it "Marvel Madmen Cut Loose" for some reason, and all anyone's expecting it to be is your typical state-of-the-decline-of-the-art question and answer session with Marvel's editors. But Ralph says to me, and I paraphrase, "With a title like that we ought to do something that isn't boring." Immediately we brainstorm a number of ways to spice up a Q & A hour, and as we meet with our fellow Marveloids minutes before we take the stage, we tell them to hang loose, face front, and follow our lead. Our first innovation is instead of just randomly calling on people from the audience, we would toss an orange which we pilfered from the breakfast table (the infamous "Orange of Inquisition" which San Diegans still speak of in stage whispers) at the audience and only he or she who catches the orange would be allowed to speak. Our second big innovation is that we would take breaks from the Q & As every couple of questions to do Stupid Editor Tricks. Such as. . .leading the audience in a sing-along. . .a moondance competition . . .standing Peter David on his head . . .and the ever-popular Marvel Madmen Human Pyramid. Participants in this fabled first foray back into the performance arena were (if memory serves) Tom DeFalco, Don Daley, Carl Potts, Ralph and me. Well, the audience seemed to eat up our shameless shenanigans by the pitchfork, and before you could say "Live at the Improv," the avant garde exhibitionist bug bit me once again, and I was hot for next year's convention season to begin so we could get the Marvel Madmen Comedy/Trauma Hour honed and polished.

So in 1988, we did just that, starting in Oakland, moving on to Chicago, and winding up in San Diego again. Editor in Chief Tom DeFalco (without whom nothing would be possible) had his face entirely behind these excursions into the outre. Marvel had just changed its corporate name from the Marvel Comics Group to the Marvel Entertainment Group, and he thought Marvel's convention presence ought to be entertaining as well as informative. So no matter what we came up with, two-fisted Tom was game to go along. And if the biggest guy at Marvel was willing to subject himself to good-natured humiliation, well, the rest of Marvel's editorial emissaries just had to follow suit. So in '88 we perfected the Marvel Madmen roadshow, adding various new activities that left less time for Q & A but required more audience participation in the shenanigan department. Such as the Chug-the-Pitcher-of-Pitt-Juice contest, the Pro vs. Fan Tug-of-War, or the Surrogate Answerama (don't ask). The highlight for the audience probably came at the end of the hour when they got to choose which Marvel Madman would be awarded the shaving cream pie in the face. Recipients have included Tom, Ralph, artist Marc Silvestri, and myself.

In 1989, we decided to discard the

SAN DIEGO, 1988 — Ralph Macchio watches as Mark G. practices "Comic Book As Weapon Toss."

pretext of a Q & A hour altogether, and go to an all-game show format for our hour of inane entertainment. Dusting off the Hollywood Squares idea that had worked so well in '79-'80, we re-dubbed it the Marvel Madmen Game Show, wrote a passel of new inside-the-biz questions ("What popular Marvel writer-artist appeared on cable television with his head made up to look like a derriere?"), drafted the hyper-bombastic Fabian Nicieza to be the host, and took it on the road.

In 1990, Fabe, Howard Mackie and I came up with what we thought would be an even wilder and woolier Marvel entertainment extravaganza — the Marvelympics. Forget the Q & A, forget the sedentary game show, the 'Lympics would feature the uninhibited Marveloids competing against the frenetic fans in physical activites that would be deemed unfit for company picnics. The Serpent Society Slither (shimmying on your stomach without using your arms or legs). . .The Bullseye Comics-as-Weapons toss (see who could throw an unaltered comic book the farthest). . . the Black Bolt Scream-Off (who's the loudest). . .the ever-popular Living Mummy Wrap (completely unwinding a roll of toilet tissue around a person). . .and the Galactus Planetoid Snack-Off (stuffing marshmallows in your mouth without swallowing or spitting them up). The Marvelympics brought the dignity of Marvel's crack editorial crew to a new all-time low and the enjoyment of the attendees to an all-time high. The fabulous prizes we gave away sure didn't hurt.

So it's 1991. We've put what passes for our heads together to brainstorm something new to entertain the Marvelous Masses, and have come up with something quite unlike anything we've done so far. You'll be hearing about it on the Bullpen Bulletins page real soon. Furthermore, we've decided to up the number of hours of performance-type entertainment we're offering to the major conventions, and so will be bringing back the tried-and-true game-shows "Marvel Pros and Cons" as well as "The Plotting Game." (Hey, didn't Merv Griffin start this way?) Who knows, I may even live to see the day we premiere "Beneath the Planet of the Fans." Let's see some cards and letters demanding to see it, folks! In the meantime, your life will not be complete without witnessing at least once the spectacle of seeing your favorite Bullpen superstars make entertainment live on stage without a net! Plan to attend a major convention if at all possible, okay?

Marvel Comics. We take our comics seriously. But not ourselves. It's show time, folks!

—Mark Gruenwald

CHICAGO, 1989 — Tom D. and Mark G. in Pitt-Juice Chug Off.

STAN'S SOAPBOX

Hi, Heroes,

Ever since I mentioned Marvel's latest dynamite heroine, The NightCat, in the Bullpen Bulletins pages of our mags, we've been besieged by requests for more information. Well, as you all know, I'd much rather devote my column to more esoteric subjects such as horticulture, chemical engineering or brain surgery, but since you insist, out of the goodness of my ever-compassionate heart, I'll fill you in on the daringly dramatic details of how the NightCat came to be! (Hey! I heard that guy in the back mumbling, "Came to be *what*?" Remember, dude, nobody likes a loudmouth!)

It all started on a fateful day, early last year, when I received a phone call from an old pal of mine named Don Kessler. He sounded real excited, so I figured something earth-shattering must be up, 'cause dapper Don's usually a mellow, laid-back kind of guy.

"Stan," said he, "I've met the most terrific girl!"

Now before we go any further, I've gotta tell you that people don't normally call me long distance from New York to California every time they meet a girl. So I figured this had to be something pretty special.

Don told me her name was Jackie Tavarez and, in his own words, "She's a rock singer and an actress and a model and she's young and gorgeous and talented and—" he went on and on without stopping to catch his breath!

Well, to make a long story short, which is something guys who get paid by the word don't usually do, Don introduced me to Jackie on my next trip to New York and I had to admit that she was all he had claimed, and more! After telling me that Jackie was about to sign a recording contract with LMR, Don hit me with his off-the-wall idea. . .

"How about letting her be in one of Marvel's comic books?" he asked. "Maybe one of your super heroes could visit a nightclub and see her singing there, or better still, maybe she could help one of them battle a super villain because she's also a karate expert!"

Well, I thought about that for a while and ended up with an idea that was even wilder than Don's. Instead of Jackie merely guest-starring in a mighty Marvel mag, why not go all the way and let Jackie be the star of her own new super hero series? After all, she has the looks, the talent and the charisma, so wouldn't it be cool to do a comic book based on a real live, flesh-and-blood personality?

One thing led to another, and before we knew it, I was talking to everyone's favorite editor in chief, Titanic Tom DeFalco, about our little brainstorm, 'cause good ol' Tom knows a nifty notion when he hears one. So before you could say, "Look out, Madonna, Jackie's on her way!" the whole blushin' Bullpen got into the act and that's how the NightCat was born!

But keep your seat belt fastened a while longer, Believer, we're not finished yet! I've gotta tell you about the fun we had designing her costume. . .

This was one of those rare instances when we had the chance to create a costume for a real person—who was a beautiful female, to boot! I wish you could have been there! Costume designs were flying around the Bullpen like confetti; it seemed that everyone wanted to get into the act! Finally, we saw one design by Jim Lee (who's not related to me, though I'd be proud if he was! The guy's a major, major talent—as if you didn't know!) Well, Jimbo's costume blew everyone's mind, including Jackie's herself, so that was it!

The next step was getting the right story for our fabulous feline fantasy female (whew!). I came up with a basic concept and laid it on two of our glitzier geniuses, Jim Salicrup and Barry Dutter. (I better make sure that I spell "Salicrup" right since he's the editor of MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE. One slip-up on my part, and the Soapbox'll probably be replaced by Jim's Jaunty Jottings!)

Anyway, Slim-Jim and Busy Barry huddled for a while and came up with a merely sensational plot outline that was perfect for a 46 page premiere issue of THE NiGHTCAT! So the project was off and running.

I finally breathed a sigh of relief. I had done my part. Now the garrulous gang back in New York could put the whole thing together. But life is never that simple! Next thing I knew, I was asked if I had time to write the actual script for Jackie's extraordinary epic. Well, of course I didn't have the time. But, of course I couldn't say no! Who could resist writing the very first issue of a mag that's destined for virtual immortality? I've never been known for my will power!

The rest, to coin a cliché, is history! One of Marvel's most awesome creative teams was carefully assembled to make sure that the NightCat lives up to its full potential. Ramrodded by the ever-exquisite editing of Blissful Bob Budiansky, we were lucky to get the powerful penciling by Daring Denys Cowan and the inimitable inking of Jaunty Jim Palmiotti. As for me writing the script, well, three out of four ain't bad!

One last word of warning—be sure to keep your NiGHTCAT issues in a safe place. Since they're based on a real person, you never know when Jackie herself will come knocking on your door to make sure you haven't torn or wrinkled any pages!

And now, nothing remains but to leave you with the immortal words of fearless Irving Forbush, "Aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus!" Or, as Merry Terry Stewart might add, "Marvel Marches On!"

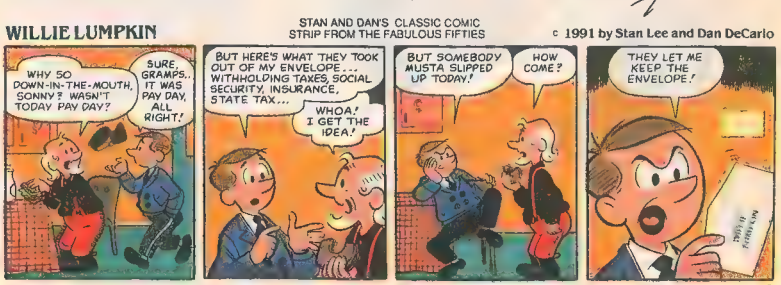
Excelsior!

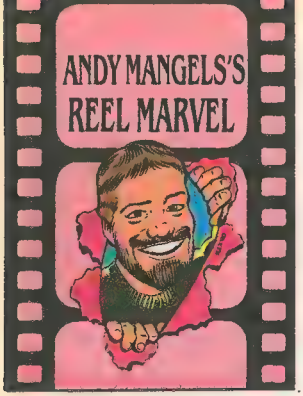
Stan

WILLIE LUMPKIN

STAN AND DAN'S CLASSIC COMIC STRIP FROM THE FABULOUS FIFTIES

© 1991 by Stan Lee and Dan DeCarlo


WHY SO DOWN-IN-THE-MOUTH, SONNY? WASN'T TODAY PAY DAY?
SURE, GRAMPS.. IT WAS PAY DAY, ALL RIGHT.
BUT HERE'S WHAT THEY TOOK OUT OF MY ENVELOPE . .. WITHHOLDING TAXES, SOCIAL SECURITY, INSURANCE, STATE TAX,...
WHOA! I GET THE IDEA!
BUT SOMEBODY MUSTA SLIPPED UP TODAY!
HOW COME?
THEY LET ME KEEP THE ENVELOPE!



SING-ALONG with MARVEL®!

Welcome back to REEL MARVEL. For newcomers, this column focuses on Marvel's rich history of television and film adaptations, past, present and future.

In issue #96, I promised to reveal the lyrics to the Marvel theme songs, as presented in various TV series. The most famous of these was the SPIDERMAN (yes, without the hyphen) theme written by Bob Harris (no relation to X-Editor, Bob Harras) and Paul Francis Webster.

The song, and the show, premiered on September 9, 1967, and was quickly picked up by the nation's youth.

FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD SPIDERMAN

Spiderman, Spiderman,
Does whatever a spider can.
Spins a web, any size
Catches thieves, just like flies!
Look out. . .here comes the Spiderman!
Is he strong? Listen, Bud,
He's got radioactive blood!
Can he swing, from a thread?
Take a look, overhead
Hey there, there goes the Spiderman!

In the chill of the night, at the scene of a crime,
Like a streak of light, he arrives just in time!

Spiderman, Spiderman,
Friendly neighborhood Spiderman.
Wealth and fame, he's ignored,
Action is his reward.
To him
Life is a great big bang-up,
Wherever there's a hang-up,
You'll find the Spiderman!

cartoons, which premiered a year earlier (September 2, 1966), were a syndicated daily show which concentrated on a different hero each day of the week. Thus, although the show had its own theme song, so did each hero! Be prepared before you read these; they're swinging, hip, gear, and ginchy!

THE MARVEL SUPER HEROES

Meet the bulky, kinda sulky, kinda Hulky, super hero
Altruistic and electically tansistorized super hero
And exotically neurotic and aquatic super hero,
The Marvel Super Heroes have arrived!
Super-powers from their foreheads to their toes,
Watch them change their very shape before your nose.
See our cane-striking super heroes change to Viking super heroes,
The Marvel Super Heroes have arrived!

THE MIGHTY THOR

From the Rainbow Bridge of Asgard,
Where the booming heavens roar,
You'll behold in breathless wonder,
The God of Thunder. . .
Mighty Thor!

IRON MAN

Tony Stark makes you feel
He's a cool exec with a heart of steel.
But as Iron Man, all jets ablaze,
He fights and fights with repulsor rays!
Amazing armor, it's Iron Man!
A blazing bomber, it's Iron Man!

SUB-MARINER

Stronger than a whale,
He can swim anywhere,
He can breathe underwater,
Or go flying through the air.
The noble Sub-Mariner is the prince of the sea,
So be wary every demon,
'Cause Namor of Atlantis is the prince of the sea!

CAPTAIN AMERICA

When Captain America throws his mighty shield,
All those who chose to oppose his shield must yield!
If he's led to a fight,
And the duel is due,
Then the red and the white and the blue will come through
When Captain America throws his mighty shield!

THE EVER-LOVIN' HULK

Doc Bruce Banner, belted with gamma rays,
Turns into the Hulk, ain't he un-glamorays?
Wreckin' the town with the power of a bull,
Ain't no monster clown,
Who is as lovable as. . .ever-lovin' Hulk?
Hulk! Hulk!

None of the other Marvel TV shows or films has had a theme song, although THE INCREDIBLE HULK AND SPIDER-MAN show in 1982 did have some fabulous opening narration by none other than Stan "the Man" Lee! Spider-Man did, however, have a series of records out in the 70's, several of which were "Rock-comics." As soon as I get a hold of all of them, I'll do a sequel to this column (if anyone has these records and can do a recording, write in)!

Meanwhile, wasn't this just too much fun for a Marvelite to have? If it wasn't enough for you, tune in next month while we track the exploits of that poor quartet without a theme song, THE FANTASTIC FOUR! We'll look at their journey from television to radio to television and possibly . . . to film? As always, let me know what shows you'd like to see covered in this column. We'll see you next issue, with Herbie the robot, right here at REEL MARVEL.

BLACK PANTHER

PANTHER'S PREY

The incessant, thudding beat of drums. . . Huge stone idols in the image of the great cats. . .Vast mounds of a strange substance known as "vibranium". . .Technological wonders in the midst of a humid jungle. . .These elements can only be found in the pages of the prestige-format four issue Limited Series featuring Marvel's majestic monarch, the Black Panther!

As created by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby in the sixties, T'Challa the Black Panther is sovereign of the African kingdom of Wakanda, a modern marvel in the center of the jungle. As all True Believers know, T'Challa was the first black Super Hero to appear in comics. He made his first appearance in FANTASTIC FOUR #52, and since then served as an Avenger for years, enjoying semi-regular status.

In the mid-seventies one of the Panther's finest hours would come within the pages of JUNGLE ACTION, issues #6-18. This was Don McGregor's epic "Panther's Rage" series, in which T'Challa left his Avenger's duties in the States to return to his native homeland, only to face a revolution led by the imposing Eric Killmonger. This tale took the Panther all over his kingdom, portraying him with exceptional realism. "Panther's Rage" stands as one of the finest Marvel continued stories of all time

Don McGregor returned to the character last year with his 25-part "Panther's Quest" series in MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS. This story, featuring art by Gene Colan, detailed T'Challa's search for his mother, and the prejudice, difficulties and impossible odds he encountered along the way.

This spring will see the release of BLACK PANTHER: PANTHER'S PREY, a four-issue Limited Series written by Don McGregor and drawn by Dwayne Turner. MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE recently spoke to Don about this long-awaited series.

A truly unique feature of the Limited Series is that it will be produced from Dwayne's full pencils, untouched by India ink, giving the work a beautifully rendered look.

"The storyline takes place a few months after 'Quest,'" Don revealed. "It's a brand-new storyline, not 'Panther's Rage' or a sequel as such, but rather a new story featuring some of the same characters. Fans of the original 'Rage' should be very happy."

Some of the original "Panther's Rage" characters will also be returning. "We'll see the return of W'Kabi, communications officer Taku, Venomm, and some other characters we don't want to reveal right now. One of the main points of focus will be the Panther's commitment to Monica Lynne, his long-time girlfriend."

Rumor has it that Monica will possibly be changing the Panther's life. When we asked Don about this, he replied "Yes, the Panther's love life will be changed forever during the course of this series."

Fans of Don's work know that his scripts usually have a political backdrop, and may be wondering if "Panther's Prey" will be more political or action-oriented. "I've always tried to blend the two," Don offered. "We've tried to create an exciting story which concentrates on characterization. It will also be very contemporary, as drugs will be entering the Panther's kingdom of Wakanda."

Obviously long-time fans will have much to be happy about with the new series, but what about newer Panther fans? "There will be some never before revealed background on Wakandan religious ceremonies, the origin of the heart shaped herbs used in the rituals which give the Panther his powers, and a scientific explanation of just exactly how the Panther is able to do some of the amazing things he does."

Don also promises "a cutaway diagram of the vibranium mounds, plus other neat stuff."

"Speaking of artwork," Don continues, "Dwayne Turner has been beautiful to work with. He is an amazing talent who has a great love for these characters. It's a great thrill to see the pages of Dwayne's full pencils when they come in. Not only is he growing as an artist, but he is one of the best partners I've ever had."

"Steve Mattsson will be supplying the painted colors for the book. These characters should be alive and colorful, and Wakanda should have a magical, enchanting quality. Steve's work reflects those qualities."

The Limited Series will be released in the Bookshelf format, and will be edited by the able hands of Terry Kavanagh, editor of MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS, EXCALIBUR, and NAMOR, THE SUB-MARINER.

PANTHER'S PREY will be a sweeping story with a variety of locales, including Washington D.C., New York City and Wakanda, of course. The first issue will ship in March, so there's still plenty of time to reserve your copy. Whether you're a long-time fan or a newer Marvel Zombie, you won't want to miss this much-anticipated series by one of the most accomplished writers in comics today, not to mention the stunning full-pencil artwork by one of Marvel's hottest new artists.

So the next time you hear the continuous beat of drums. . .marvel at strange rituals never before seen by human eyes. . .or experience perils and action fraught with, dare I say it—jungle action—chances are you're poring over your copy of the new Black Panther limited series, PANTHER'S PREY!

—Mitch Tart

DEATHLOK

Q. *Who is 395 pounds of cybernetic bionics, can bench press two tons under optimal conditions, and considers himself the ugliest guy on the block?*

A. DEATHLOK, formerly the DEMOLISHER!

Long-time Marvelmaniacs will remember the computerized killing machine's previous adventures in the 1970's in ASTONISHING TALES and in the 1980's in CAPTAIN AMERICA and MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE. Now, after a successful Limited Series, it's Deathlok's turn for the 1990's revamping that other 1970's heroes, most notably the Ghost Rider, have come to enjoy.

The demolishing one now appears in his own monthly book, simply titled DEATHLOK. The creative team of Dwayne McDuffie, Gregory Wright and Denys Cowan is very excited about the premiere issue, in which Deathlok confronts the cybernetic War-Wolf, a robotic monster created by Deathlok's arch-foe Harlan Ryker.

The monthly book picks up where last year's Limited Series leaves off, leaving Cybertek Software Designer Michael Collins trapped in the body of the killing machine he unwittingly helped to create. After confronting Cybertek Project Director Harlan Ryker, Collins is murdered and his brain transplanted into the Deathlok cyborg.

Slowly, Collins gained control over the prosthetic body, but not before fulfilling Ryker's programming, turning the former scientist into a murderer. Deathlok crushes Ryker's criminal empire, and discovers that his body still exists, kept in stasis, and that it's possible that he can be returned to it. As Deathlok says in issue #1, "My humanity isn't lost, it's just misplaced."

Deathlok searches through the now-defunct Cybertek computer records in search of his missing body. When the War-Wolf appears, destroying the information systems to cover up Ryker's past crimes and Deathlok's only hope of regaining his lost humanity, the action kicks into high gear.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE spoke to the creative team through a series of in-depth telephone interviews. Here's what they had to say.

"We both grew up with the Deathlok character," Gregory explained, "I loved the Rich Buckler issues of ASTONISHING TALES. When Dwayne and I heard that Marvel wanted to update the character, we leapt at the chance. He's a great character, visually, and an awful lot of fun."

"Gregory's right." Dwayne added. "The Limited Series we had done was intended as a test for Deathlok. Since the book has sold well, Marvel decided to give it a shot.

"Deathlok was a favorite of mine as a kid. The original series was very intriguing. The whole thing needed to be revamped, obviously, since the original

Deathlok was created in 1990—what was once the future! It was important to everyone that Deathlok become part of the Marvel Universe, so that he could interact with all these great characters."

The entire revamping process was a difficult one, and the team's original ideas changed many times. Gregory explained, "We started by looking at the physical aspects of the character, and changing things we didn't like. Denys was enormously helpful, he's a very creative guy. He had a lot of input, he didn't just draw the pictures."

"Take the War-Wolf for example," Dwayne continued, "The original model was a friend of the first Deathlok. When we decided to use the character again, I'd intended to have it look like a large metal dog. Denys wasn't crazy about the idea, so he came up with these really wild designs. The look of the creature is really his doing. I'm really very happy with it."

Over the years, Deathlok's character has made the transition from inhuman killing machine to Super Hero. Gregory explained the differences between the old and new Deathloks. "Luther Manning, Deathlok number one, was a soldier. He was used to killing. He didn't want to be Deathlok anymore than Collins, but the transition to an ultra-violent killing machine wasn't as drastic for him. Collins is a pacifist, he thought he was doing work which would help people. He's a scientist dropped into the body of the ultimate killing machine, and I think it makes an interesting premise."

Dwayne agreed. "Although Deathlok must sometimes react violently to a situation, it's never an unconscionable act. There will be a lot of action in the book, but I'd like to buck the trend of dark, gritty heroes. It would be easy for Deathlok to blow away the bad guys, the way the Punisher or Wolverine does. Deathlok's convictions won't let him kill, even if it means the villain will escape. He feels that if he kills the bad guy, then the bad guy has won."

Many readers enjoy the relationship between Deathlok and the Computer, and in fact, this was a favorite aspect for Dwayne. "Since the Computer is hopelessly intelligent, there's room for lots of dry humor. For instance, if Deathlok was to ask a rhetorical question, the Computer would answer. I'd like them to develop a nice interplay between them."

Invariably, Deathlok will be compared to other newly revamped heroes, such as Ghost Rider, the Punisher and the new Hulk. Gregory goes to great pains to avoid comparison, but he did have some insights to offer. "I can see similarities, but I feel there are more differences. Take the Punisher, for example. He's a sociopath, wreaking vengence on the underworld at any cost. I'd say he's more like the Ghost Rider. Deathlok has encountered every single person responsible for turning him into a cyborg, and although he's had ample opportunities to do so, refused to kill them. So he's not hungry for revenge, per se."

"Where the new Hulk is concerned, particularly the way Peter David's been doing him with the triple Banner/Green/Gray personality, he's more crafty and wicked. He can be bought, as we've seen in the ACTS OF VENGEANCE series. You could say that Deathlok is a triple personality, between Collins/Computer/Machine, but he's more of a gentle soul. He wants to escape his fate, and return to his family."

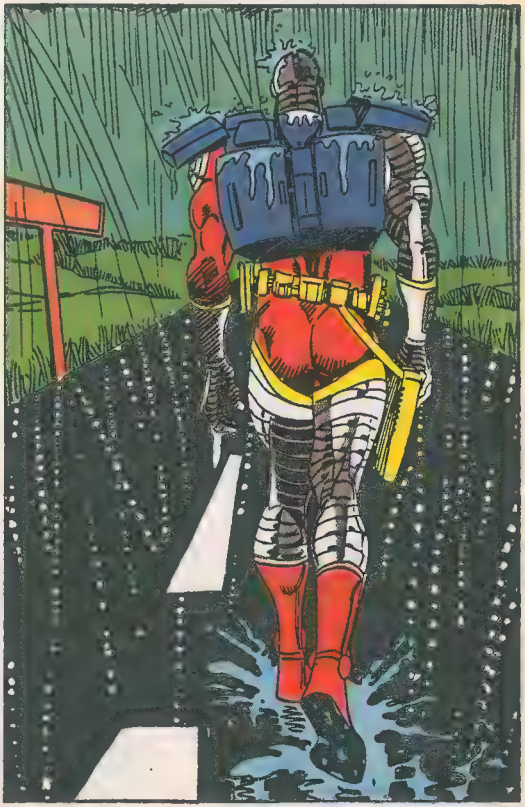
Dwayne continued, "People tend to group these sort of characters together, though I don't see Deathlok as being that much like any of these. Sure, Punisher and Deathlok both lost their families and consider themselves dead men, but they deal with their grief completely differently.'

"He's a very tragic character. I was always a big fan of the Thing. I think everyone can identify to some degree with the concept of being judged by your looks, of not being given a chance because of what people think you are. However, Deathlok is determined to work this through, to regain his humanity and be reunited with his family."

It's safe to say that fans will enjoy the new, sensitive, Deathlok. Unlike his previous incarnation, there's a man under all that chrome and steel who wants to make the world a better place, and who's determined to make the best of things.

The Demolisher is dead.

— Mike Lackey



HEY, KIDS!! It's
FRED HEMBECK
and the MAD GOD of Death, THANOS
in "A Mind Is A Terrible Thing To LOSE... Even For Just A Little While..."
ALL IN ALL, I'D SAY IT WENT PRETTY WELL, THANOS. YOU GOT TO PLUG YOUR LIMITED SERIES, The INFINITY GAUNTLET, AND I GOT A NICE INTERVIEW FOR MY SHOW...
...WELL, MAYBE "NICE" ISN'T THE RIGHT WORD, BUT..
ANYWAY, I REALLY DO APPRECIATE YOUR COMING ON...oh, AND, uh, THANKS FOR NOT KILLING ME, heh...
DON'T THINK IT DIDN'T TAKE A GREAT DEAL OF RESTRAINT NOT TO, BUT REALLY, WHAT GOOD WOULD IT HAVE DONE ME, WORM? DO YOU TRULY THINK THIS IS MY LAST LIMITED SERIES?! NONSENSE! I'M SURE TO HAVE USE FOR YOU AGAIN.
LOOKING FORWARD TO IT, heh..
JUST THEN, AS THIS ODDEST OF COUPLES ARE ABOUT TO GO THEIR SEPERATE WAYS, AN IMMENSE BOLT OF LIGHTNING FILLS THE NIGHT SKY, ONLY TO COME CRASHING DOWN, AND---
CRRRRR
unhh
"DARK SIDE"?..
FOOL!
NEVER
SAY "DARK SIDE" TO THANOS, MAD GOD OF DEATH, CRETIN!!
uh, WAITAMIN NIT, I--
BANG ZOOM
..I WAS WRONG..
..I ALWAYS THOUGHT MORTON DOWNEY, JR. WAS THE TOUGHEST TALK SHOW HOST AROUND...
MEANWHILE..
..sigh.. NO ONE EVER TAKES ME SERIOUSLY. I SUPPOSE THE ONLY WAY I'D EVER GET ANY RESPECT--
--WAS IF I CAPTURED A REALLY, REALLY POWERFUL BAD GUY, LIKE DORMAMMU, the RED SKULL, OR--
Oh, I UNDERSTAND ALL RIGHT. I UNDERSTAND THAT THE WIMPY CONSCIOUSNESS OF HEMBECK IS NOW INHABITING THE BIG TOUGH IMPOSING BODY OF THANOS.
..er..
..AND I ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT NO ONE ELSE REALIZES THAT PARTICULAR LITTLE FACT... heh..
H-HEY! WHA-- WHAT ARE YA GONNA D-DO..?
CRASH POW
HEY LOOK, EVERYBODY!! PLEASE NOTE THAT I, BROTHER VOODOO, HAVE SUBDUED AND CAPTURED THE MIGHTY THANOS!! SOMEONE--PLEASE!CALL THE AVENGERS!
AT THAT PRECISE MO OF NATURE'S (NOT TO MACHINATIONS OF THE BUT TWICE'S EFFECTIVE EFFECTED EARLIER.
BWA

Fred Hembeck character and the distinctive likeness thereof is a trademark of Fred Hembeck

Uh,MY ARE THEY DEAD?GET REAL--OF COURSE THEY'RE NOT DEAD! DO THEY HAVE SUPER SPEED? UH,UH, SORRY--WRONG CHANNEL.
BAH!
..GOOD-NESS GRACIOUS...
NOPE. THAT LIGHTNING BOLT DIDN'T HARM OUR TWO PROTAGONISTS --IT MERELY SWITCHED THEIR PERSONALITIES!! HOW? HEH,LOOK PAL, THIS IS A COMIC BOOK, AND IN A COMIC BOOK, LIGHTNING BOLTS DO EXACTLY WHAT THEY'RE TOLD TO DO!.
YOU WANT PLAUSIBLE EXPLANATIONS, READ A SCIENCE TEXTBOOK, OKAY? SHEESH...
...FROM THE MANTLE OF GODHOOD TO THIS!? WHAT A TRULY REVOLTING DEVELOPMENT FOR THA---
OW!
WATCH WHERE YOU ARE GOING,MISCREANT!!
OH,IT'S YOU,HEMBECK. LOOK,I DON'T BLAME YOU FOR BEING UPSET. I REALIZE I'VE BEEN DUCKING YOU AND YOUR SHOW FOR MONTHS NOW,BUT FRANKLY,BUD,I PLAIN DON'T NEED YOU OR YOUR PUBLICITY. WHY,heh,I DON'T EVEN NEED MCFARLANE TO SELL IT!...THO I'M SURE IT WOULDN'T HURT!..)
I CARE LITTLE TO HEAR YOUR BOASTINGS, SMALL WEASELY ONE. LEAVE ME BE.
Ah,A HEMBECK WITH FANGS, eh? SHOWING US YOUR DARK SIDE, FREDDO? heh...
THANOS?!?
eep
BROTHER VOODOO?
WELL..GOOD-BYE!
WAIT! I NEED YOUR HELP!
W-WHAT? YOU--YOU NEED MY HELP?
YES. FIRST OF ALL, I'M NOT THANOS. NOT REALLY. ACTUALLY, I'M FRED HEMBECK, TRAPPED IN THE BODY OF THANOS
YOU'RE... FRED HEMBECK?
uh huh.
THE GUY WHO WOULDN'T HAVE ME ON HIS TV SHOW BECAUSE HE SAID NO ONE WAS INTERESTED IN SEEING ME?
WELL, heh,LOOK, I-I HAVE TO GO WHERE THE RATINGS ARE--YOU UNDERSTAND THAT, DON'T YOU?
MENT,THE FICKLE FINGER MENTION THE DELICATE PLOT] STRIKES NOT ONCE BY REVERSING THE EFFECTS
POW
NO WOULDN'T YOU KNOW IT? WITHIN MERE MINUTES...
YOU'RE A MAN AFTER MY OWN HEART,BUD! WHAT SAY WE GO GET US SOME BREWSKIS AND MAYBE SCARE UP A LITTLE MORE... heh..ACTION?
BAH! WHY NOT? AFTER ALL, PERHAPS THERE'S A LIMITED SERIES IN IT,OR AT LEAST A PRESTIGE FORMAT ONE SHOT...
COMING SOON?: "WOLVERINE and THANOS BEAT EVERY-ONE IN SIGHT TO A BLOODY PULP!"
..I'LL TELL YOU ONE THING...
...THAT'S ONE INTERVIEW I'M GONNA LET REGIS HANDLE...

Attention,True Believers!

Spring will herald the return to Marvel of one of Comic Fandom's most popular artists, George Perez! Fans of ol' Marvel last feasted on George's work way back in AVENGERS #201. Now George is back, teaming with the cosmically powered pen of Jim Starlin to bring Marveldom assembled a story bigger than the Hulk's toenail clippers (Now is that the gray Hulk or the green? I digress).

This May, Marvel proudly presents THE INFINITY GAUNTLET, a six-issue epic that would make Homer blush to behold!

In the last several months within the pages of that surfin' savior of the stratosphere, namely the SILVER SURFER, we have witnessed the capture of the Infinity Gems by the newly resurrected Thanos. With these six gems, Thanos has achieved the mantle of Supreme Being of the Universe, controlling space and time, reality and power, and the mind and soul.

Why, you ask?

Perhaps to dominate a dimension, pulverize a planet, or simply to make PEOPLE magazine's top ten list of most influencial figures of 1991? Au contraire, cosmic connoisseurs. Thanos's impetus is "love"...his love of Death!

To prove his love to the Deacon of Dying, Thanos has promised to destroy half the population of the universe, and he does that in the very first issue! With casualties this extreme it's a fair bet that certain members of the Marvel Universe are included in the body count. Who will die? Who will survive? Only Jim, George, and inker extraordinaire Joe Rubinstein know for sure (Jim wouldn't even tell me)!

The main players of this cosmic Hamlet are Thanos, the Silver Surfer, Death, Mephisto and a super surprise guest star who hasn't appeared in over ten years! And what story of ultimate power would be complete without an appearance by the Lord of Latveria, Doctor Doom, who figures prominently in the second and third issues. Of course, a saga this gargantuan can't help but affect other heroes of the Marvel Universe. Crossovers are planned for THE INCREDIBLE HULK (regardless of his color at the time), The AVENGERS and The WEST COAST AVENGERS, with other possible crossovers in the works.

Jim Starlin had never worked with George before, but found his enthusiasm to be boundless. One need only look at George's finished art to get an idea of his excitement about the project. According to Jim, George was drawing additional characters not directly called for in the script, cleverly rendering Alf on a background wall, or the White Tiger (the first hero George drew for Marvel) in a painting on the walls of Avengers Mansion. To overcome scheduling difficulties, George put several other projects on hold so that he could finish THE INFINITY GAUNTLET.

This Limited Series takes up after SILVER SURFER #50, a double-sized anniversary issue, which also happens to be the end of Jim's stint on the series. However, stand firm, fearless ones! Jim will begin a new cosmic series after INFINITY GAUNTLET, which will feature the aforementioned mystery guest star!

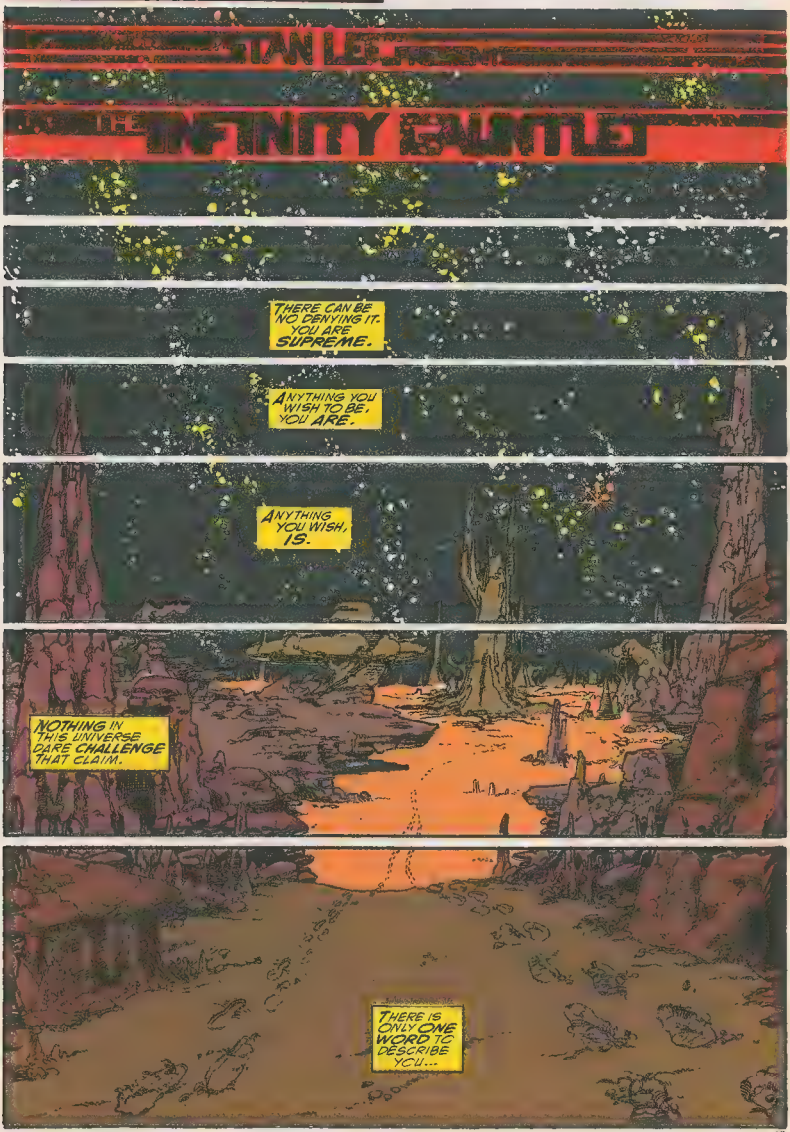
When the dust settles, THE INFINITY GAUNTLET will be the most talked about Limited Series of 1991. And what of Thanos? Rumor has it that his fate will be unlike that of any super-powered being—ever!

Sleep easy.

—Stephen Vrattos

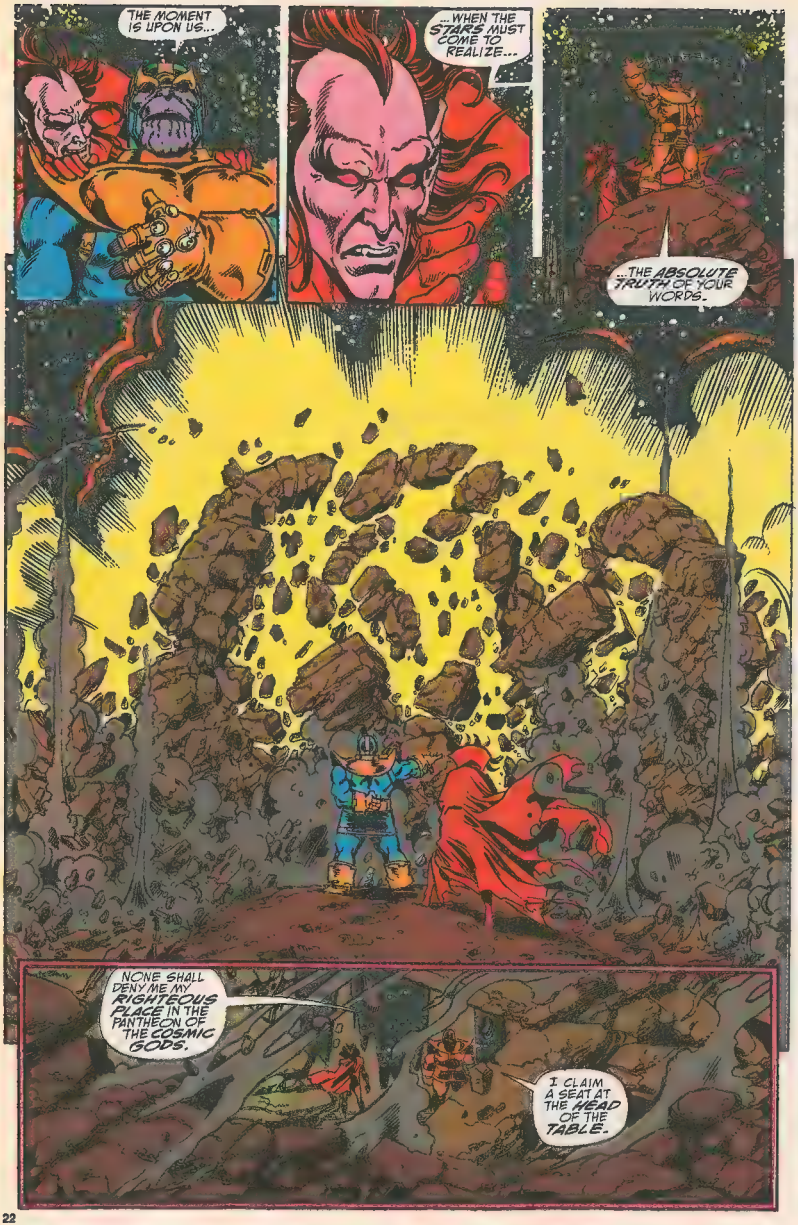
INFINITY GAUNTLET™ PREVIEW

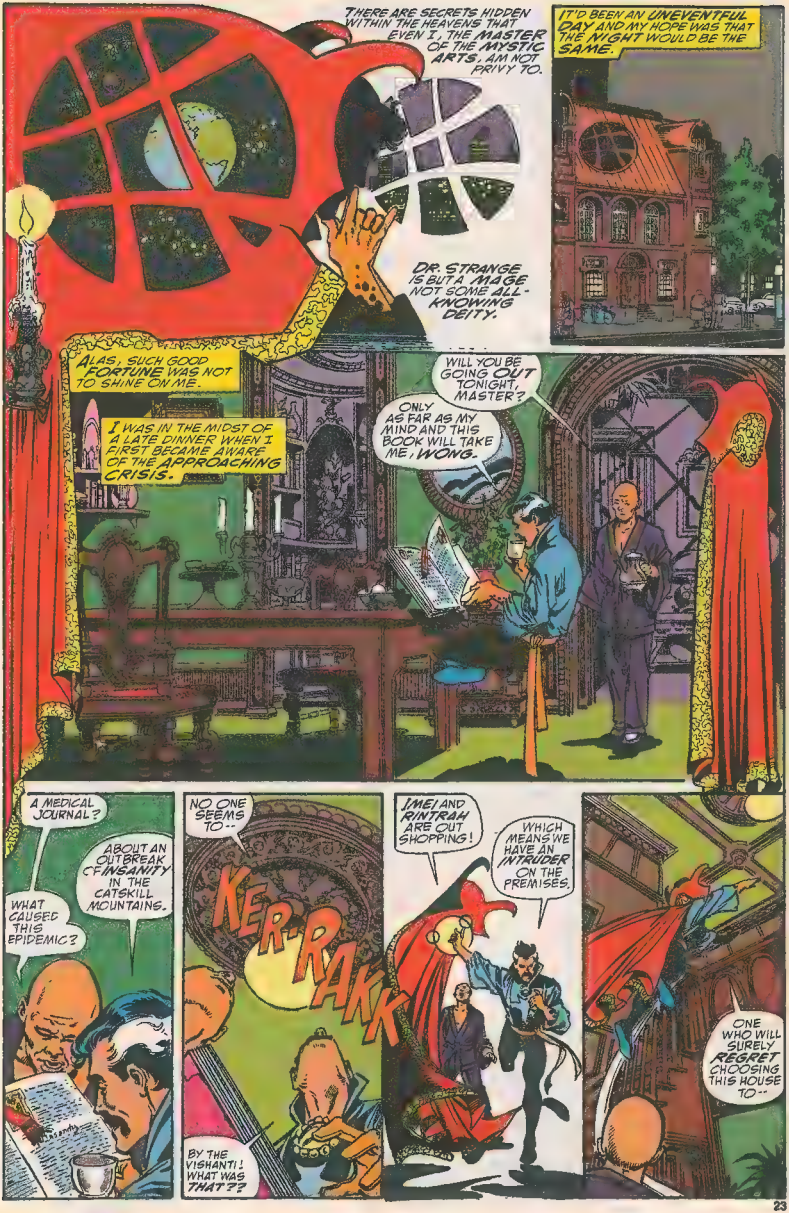
And now MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE is proud to present a special preview of Jim Starlin and George Perez's epic INFINITY GAUNTLET.

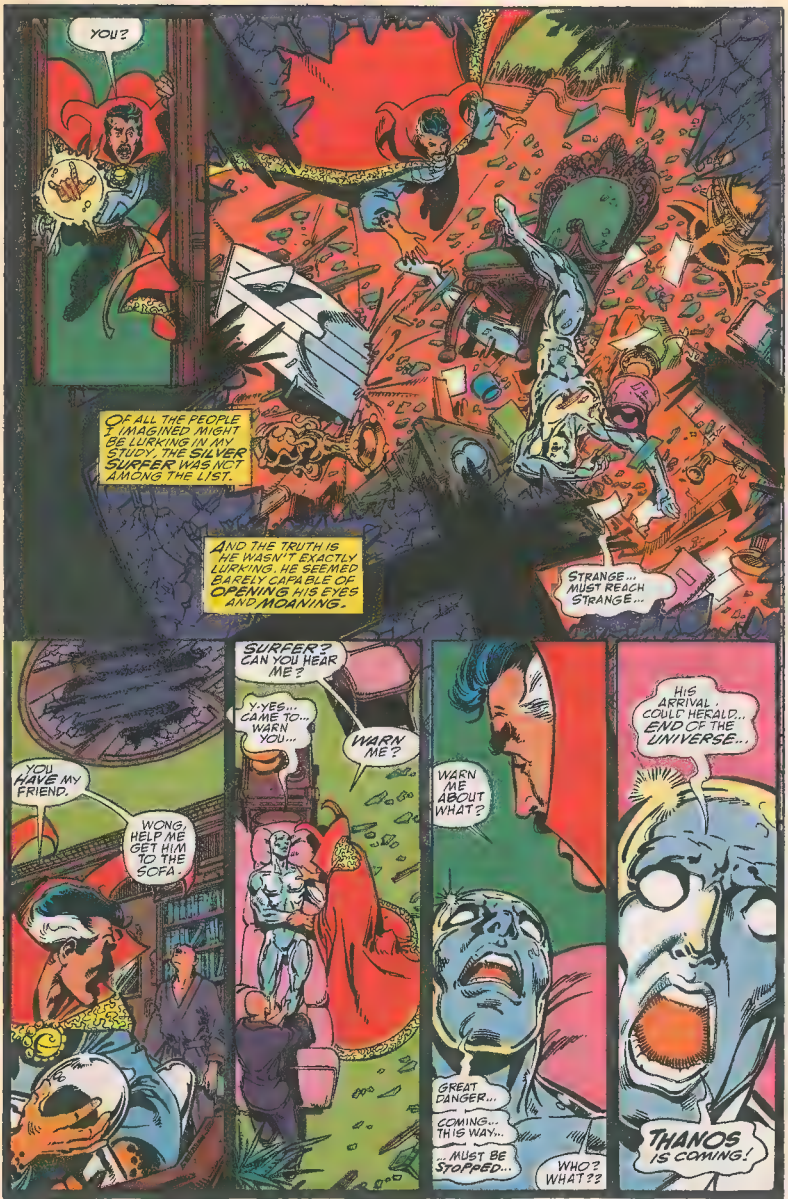

STAN LEE PRESENTS
THE INFINITY GAUNTLET
THERE CAN BE NO DENYING IT. YOU ARE SUPREME.
ANYTHING YOU WISH TO BE, YOU ARE.
ANYTHING YOU WISH, IS.
NOTHING IN THIS UNIVERSE DARE CHALLENGE THAT CLAIM.
THERE IS ONLY ONE WORD TO DESCRIBE YOU...

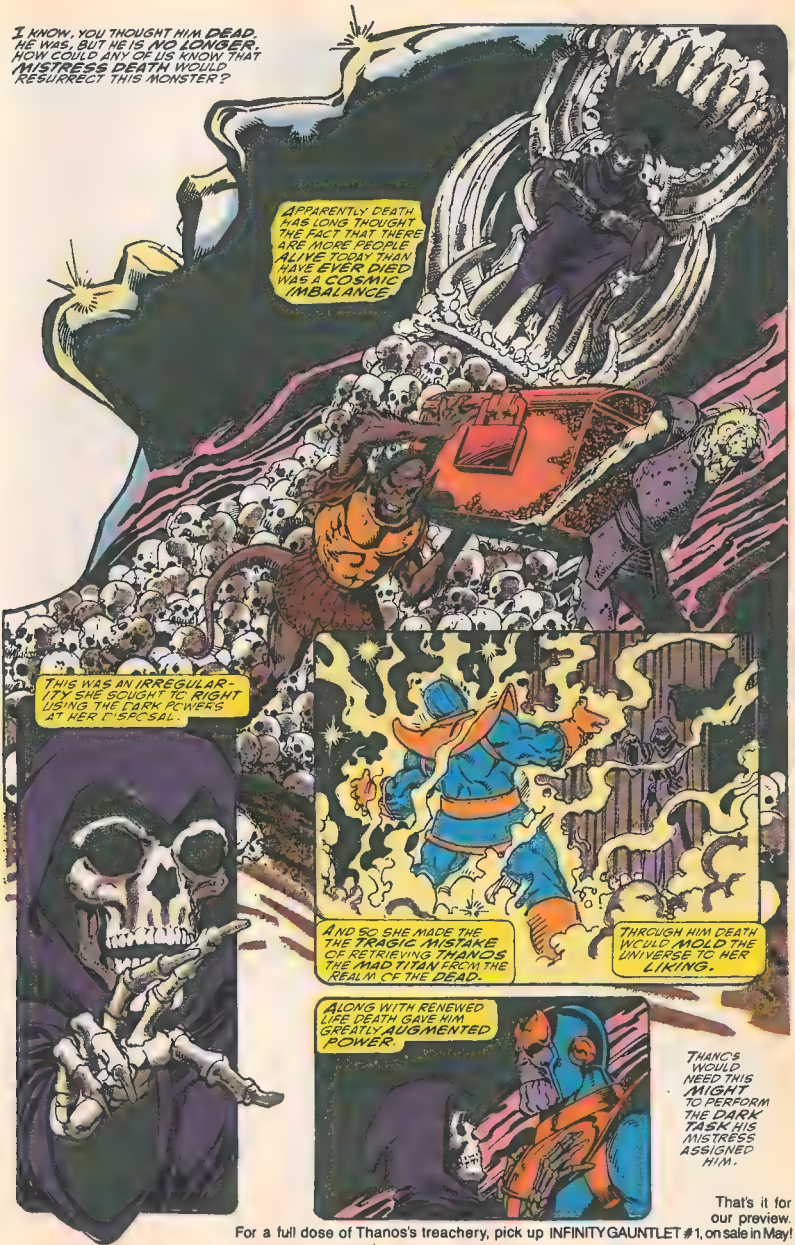
WRITER
JIM STARLIN
PENCILS
GEORGE PEREZ
INKERS
JOSEF RUBINSTEIN
LETTERS
JACK MORELLI
COLORIST
RENEE WHITTER-STAETTER
EDITOR
CRAIG ANDERSON
CHIEF
TOM DeFALCO

WITHIN YOUR GRASP RESTS THE INFINITE.
MY HUMBLE PERSONAGE BOWS BEFORE YOUR GRANDEUR.
I AM PROUD TO BE YOUR FIRST ACOLYTE AND BASK IN THE GLORY OF YOUR PRESENCE.
HOW MAY I SERVE YOU, GREAT THANOS?
BY FALLING SILENT, MEPHISTO.


THE MOMENT IS UPON US...
...WHEN THE STARE MUST COME TO REALIZE...
...THE ABSOLUTE TRUTH OF YOUR WORDS.
NONE SHALL DENY ME MY RIGHTEOUS PLACE IN THE PANTHEON OF THE COSMIC GODS.
I CLAIM A SEAT AT THE HEAD OF THE TABLE.


THERE ARE SECRETS HIDDEN WITHIN THE HEAVENS THAT EVEN I, THE MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS, AM NOT PRIVY TO.
DR. STRANGE IS BUT A MAGE NOT SOME ALL-KNOWING DEITY.
IT'D BEEN AN UNEVENTFUL DAY AND MY HOPE WAS THAT THE NIGHT WOULD BE THE SAME.
ALAS, SUCH GOOD FORTUNE WAS NOT TO SHINE ON ME.
I WAS IN THE MIDST OF A LATE DINNER WHEN I FIRST BECAME AWARE OF THE APPROACHING CRISIS.
WILL YOU BE GOING OUT TONIGHT, MASTER?
ONLY AS FAR AS MY MIND AND THIS BOOK WILL TAKE ME, WONG.
A MEDICAL JOURNAL?
ABOUT AN OUTBREAK OF INSANITY IN THE CATSKILL MOUNTAINS.
WHAT CAUSED THIS EPIDEMIC?
NO ONE SEEMS TO--
KER-RAKK
BY THE VISHANTI! WHAT WAS THAT??
ME! AND RINTRAH ARE OUT SHOPPING!
WHICH MEANS WE HAVE AN INTRUDER ON THE PREMISES.
ONE WHO WILL SURELY REGRET CHOOSING THIS HOUSE TO--


YOU?
OF ALL THE PEOPLE I IMAGINED MIGHT BE LURKING IN MY STUDY, THE SILVER SURFER WAS NOT AMONG THE LIST.
AND THE TRUTH IS HE WASN'T EXACTLY LURKING. HE SEEMED BARELY CAPABLE OF OPENING HIS EYES AND MOANING.
STRANGE... MUST REACH STRANGE...
SURFER? CAN YOU HEAR ME?
Y-YES... CAME TO... WARN YOU...
WARN ME?
YOU HAVE MY FRIEND.
WONG, HELP ME GET HIM TO THE SCFA.
WARN ME ABOUT WHAT?
GREAT DANGER...
COMING... THIS WAY...
...MUST BE STOPPED...
WHO? WHAT??
HIS ARRIVAL... COULD HERALD... END OF THE UNIVERSE...
THANOS IS COMING!


I KNOW, YOU THOUGHT HIM DEAD. HE WAS, BUT HE IS NO LONGER. HOW COULD ANY OF US KNOW THAT MISTRESS DEATH WOULD RESURRECT THIS MONSTER?
APPARENTLY DEATH HAS LONG THOUGHT THE FACT THAT THERE ARE MORE PEOPLE ALIVE TODAY THAN HAVE EVER DIED WAS A COSMIC IMBALANCE.
THIS WAS AN IRREGULARITY SHE SOUGHT TO RIGHT USING THE DARK POWERS AT HER DISPOSAL.
AND SO SHE MADE THE THE TRAGIC MISTAKE OF RETRIEVING THANOS THE MAD TITAN FROM THE REALM OF THE DEAD.
THROUGH HIM DEATH WOULD MOLD THE UNIVERSE TO HER LIKING.
ALONG WITH RENEWED LIFE DEATH GAVE HIM GREATLY AUGMENTED POWER.
THANOS WOULD NEED THIS MIGHT TO PERFORM THE DARK TASK HIS MISTRESS ASSIGNED HIM.

That's it for our preview.

For a full dose of Thanos's treachery, pick up INFINITY GAUNTLET #1, on sale in May!

THE MARVEL AGE® OF COMICS 1983 PART FOUR

1983 was a significant year for Marvel's solo superstars—but for none of them more than Iron Man, who proved not so invincible as we all thought! Tony Stark's relapse into alcoholism was one of the most spell-binding serials Marvel had ever presented, and also among the most controversial—bothersome to fans who didn't want to see a hero fall so far, but truthful to other fans who knew that alcoholism is not a problem that can be solved and forgotten about.

Manipulated by Obadiah Stane and used by Indries Moomji, Tony Stark lost his own company in a hostile takeover, and sought solace once more in liquor. When Iron Man was called for, and Tony's drunkenness kept him from responding, the job fell to a reluctant warrior: Tony's pilot and best friend, Jim Rhodes. Could Tony recover from a downward spiral that made him a street vagrant desperate only for another drink? And could Jim Rhodes master the Golden Avenger's armor in time to survive? Denny O'Neil and Luke McDonnell kept us on the edge of our seats all year long, while in IRON MAN ANNUAL Peter Gillis tossed Rhodey into the war between the Deviants and the Eternals!

Another suspenseful serial was the mystery of the Hobgoblin, the Roger Stern/John Romita Jr. villain who debuted to riotous acclaim in AMAZING SPIDER-MAN! Stilt-Man, the Vulture and the Mad Thinker also made trouble for the web-spinner, but even bigger problems were on their way when Mary Jane Watson returned to Peter's life, while the Black Cat hadn't left yet! The mysteries of Mary Jane's past gave us new perspective on everyone's favorite redhead, while Peter's five-year high school reunion was disrupted by the Kingpin in AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL.

The news was happier over in PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN, as Harry and Liz Osborn announced they were expecting a baby! Too bad it had to be born into a world with such threats as Dr. Octopus, the Owl, and the Gladiator! Also significant was the poignant leave-taking of Debra Whitman—convinced she was having a mental breakdown because she thought Peter Parker was secretly Spider-Man. And Cloak and Dagger, the Punisher and the Kingpin all declared war on each other, with only the wall-crawler to sort out the good guys from the bad!

MARVEL TALES presented Spider-Man's earliest adventures in a handsome format (if the MARVEL MASTERWORKS hardbound volumes are out of your budget, we highly recommend picking up these issues!). And for arachnid adventures of the distaff kind, SPIDER-WOMAN fought bizarre baddies such as the Gypsy Moth and the Locksmith under the aegis of hot new talent Ann Nocenti. Sadly, Ann arrived on the scene too late to help sagging sales, but the series went out with a blast—a striking photo cover, and a tale of the apparent death of heroine Jessica Drew.

Two other long running series called it a day in 1983. The first was MASTER OF KUNG FU, one of the most popular heroes of the early 70's. In his last episodes, Shang-Chi battled assassins in Paris, met his mother at long last, and finally retired from games of deceit and death to live as a simple fisherman in Asia.

Shang managed to squeeze in one last guest appearance in ROM, aiding the Spaceknight against the Dire Wraiths (who got a new look that year, as the more malevolent females replaced the Pillsbury Doughboy males). Rom's other allies and enemies included Dr. Strange, the Living Tribunal, the Spaceknight Squadron (introduced in ROM ANNUAL) and the Soviet Super-Soldiers, but no longer the residents of Clairton, West Virginia, who were now the victims of the Dire Wraith massacre!

The Johnny Blaze GHOST RIDER also came to the end of his run. Before the book ended, we learned the secret origin of Zarathos, the demon of vengeance who possessed Johnny Blaze. Mephisto, Nightmare and Zarathos all conspired against Johnny, who was saved only by the return to his life of his first love, Roxanne Simpson.

Johnny Blaze wasn't the only hero to make peace with a savage alter-ego THE INCREDIBLE HULK, after years of torture, was finally controlled by Bruce Banner's intelligence! Pardoned by the President of the United States for all his past crimes, the Hulkster battled as one of the Earth's mightiest alongside the Avengers and the She-Hulk against the evil of the Leader.

Bruce also set up an incomparable research facility to do the work that was always denied him, but lurking in the

background was his most implacable foe: Thunderbolt Ross! Unable to accept the Hulk's pardon, Ross betrayed Banner into the hands of MODOK, AIM and the Abomination—but he didn't guess his daughter's reaction!

THE INCREDIBLE HULK ANNUAL took Greenskin to a planet populated by orange and green-skinned people in eternal war—which side would the Hulk take? Things were even more cosmic in the CAPTAIN AMERICA ANNUAL, which saw the latest saga in the ongoing tale of the Cosmic Cube! The Aquarian, AIM, and the Shaper of Worlds were all on hand to reveal the amazing secret of the Cube's sentience.

In his regular series, CAPTAIN AMERICA was fighting for his life—because someone else was living it! Arnim Zola's creation, Primus, had assumed Steve Rogers' identity; would even Bernadette Rosenthal be able to tell the difference? The dynamic duo of J. Marc DeMatteis and Mike Zeck also revitalized the Scarecrow and even the Patriot, as he succumbed to cancer.

Nomad aided Cap against the Viper and the Constrictor, only to wonder about the meaning of his own heroic career. And to "cap" off the year, Luther Manning journeyed back in time to discover the fate of the future super-soldier; Deathlok the Demolisher, bringing Cap (the ultimate Super-Soldier) forward into the nuclear devastation of the 1990's—like, today!

Fans looking for happy endings could turn for once to DAREDEVIL; for in a double-sized spectacular, the revitalized Elektra redeemed herself and cleansed her spirit from the taint of the assassin cult called the Hand. Thinking her dead, Daredevil defined heroism when he resisted killing Bullseye in retribution; but would Bullseye's crippled body recover to menace DD anew? Denny O'Neil and Klaus Janson took over from Frank Miller to further the saga of the Man without Fear as he journeyed to Japan to prevent the enigmatic Darkwind from resurrecting Elektra. It climaxed in a dramatic 200th issue battle that would forever change the relationship between Daredevil and his blood enemy, Bullseye.

MOON KNIGHT also coped with the loss of a fan-favorite writer, as Doug Moench left Marvel. Before then, Doug and artist Bill Sienkiewicz delivered a classic duel between Marc Spector and the Werewolf, a return to the desert and Moon Knight's origins, and a troubling portrayal of gang violence that also introduced Daily Bugle reporter Joy Mercado.

The last (though never least to X-Men fans) to mention of Marvel's solo superstars is Alison Blaire, the DAZZLER, whose long-time rivalry with Rogue was established in the pages of her own book. Ali finally became a star in the music industry, dealing with the mixed blessings that fame delivers. However, with her sister, Lois, on the run, thinking herself a mutant killer, well, Dazz just didn't hang out at Spago a tot. She might just have been jealous about Rogue's acceptance among the X-Men, which we'll cover—along with the rest of Marvel's 1983 superteams—next month.

—*Brian Nelson*

MARVEL® COMICS PRICE GUIDE

Back issues of GHOST RIDER, according to our ever-omniscient source (Robert Overstreet's THE COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE) are listed at $1.00 an issue—but by the time you read this, what with the striking popularity of the hell-bent cyclist, that may all have changed.

Keep in mind, therefore, that the Greeks had a word for comic book speculation, or rather two words: caveat emptor (let the buyer beware). Always carefully check the condition of whatever you're buying, and remember that our monthly guide is, after all, only a guide—actual prices may vary, and should be lower for copies in fair or poor condition. (This warning brought to you by Irving Nader, Ralph's little brother, the consumer watchdog of comic book specialty shops.)

	CONDITION Good	Fine	Mint
■ AMAZING SPIDER-MAN			
236-237	.40	1.25	2.50
238 (1st Hobgoblin)	2.00	6.00	12.00
239 (2nd Hobgoblin)	1.00	3.00	6.00
240-247	.30	.95	1.90
ANNUAL 17	.40	1.20	2.40
■ CAPTAIN AMERICA			
277-288	.30	.90	1.80
ANNUAL 7	.30	.85	1.70
■ DAREDEVIL			
190-191 (Miller)	.25	.75	1.50
192-5, 197-201		.60	1.20
196 (Wolverine)	1.00	3.00	6.00
■ DAZZLER			
23-29		.50	1.00
■ GHOST RIDER			
76-81		.50	1.00
■ HULK			
279-290		.60	1.20
ANNUAL 12	.25	.75	1.50
■ IRON MAN			
166-168	.25	.75	1.50
169 (Jim Rhodes becomes Iron Man)	1.25	3.75	7.50
■ IRON MAN			
170	.70	2.00	4.00
171, ANNUAL 6	.35	1.00	2.00
172-177	.25	.75	1.50
■ MARVEL TALES			
147-158		.50	1.00
■ MASTER OF KUNG FU			
120-124		.50	1.00
125 (double-size finale)		.60	1.20
■ MOON KNIGHT			
27-34		.50	1.00
■ ROM			
38-49		.40	.80
ANNUAL 2		.50	1.00
■ SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN			
74, 76-80, 84-85	.25	.80	1.60
75 (double-size)	.35	1.05	2.10
81-82 (Punisher)	1.05	3.15	6.30
83 (retells Punisher origin)	1.25	3.70	7.40
■ SPIDER-WOMAN			
48-50		.60	1.25

MARVEL® MERCHANDISING
THE SUPER HERO® PERSONAL APPEARANCE PROGRAM

You already know about some of the great comic book events in store for you in 1991, but did you also know that you'll have more chances than ever before to have the fun of shaking hands and having your picture taken with your favorite Marvel Super Heroes and Villains? That's right, thanks to Marvel's Director of Special Events, Alyson Bristol, and Special Events Manager, Barbara Maier-Hopkins, you can meet Spider-Man, The Incredible Hulk, Captain America, Wolverine, Silver Surfer, Dr. Doom and Dr. Strange, Daredevil, The Green Goblin, The White Queen, The Enchantress, Iron Man, Magneto and Power Man who will be showing up at a plethora of events from shopping mall promotions to private parties all across the United States and Canada.

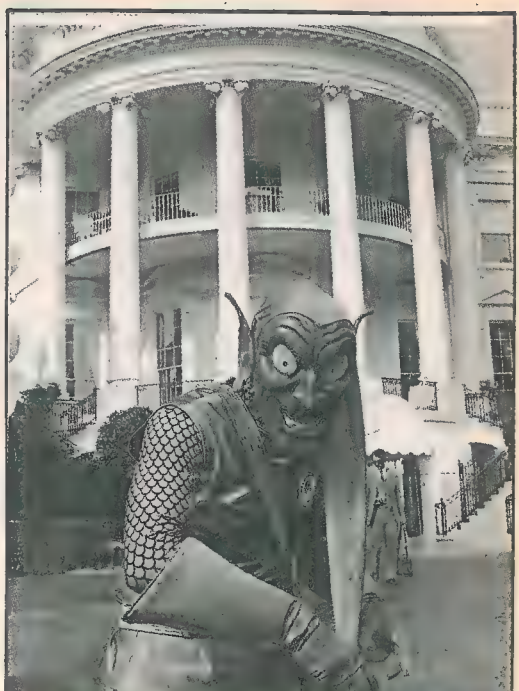
Before we go any further, since this is the first time we're really talking about the Marvel Super Hero Personal Appearance Program, it's only fair to fill you in on what exactly it is.

Not too long after Marvel took the comic book world by storm, companies, charities and fraternal organizations, not to mention lots of fans as well, started contacting us to see if there was a way some of our characters could make personal appearances at events they were sponsoring. You see, they knew that a sure-fire way of making their event really special was to have someone like Spider-Man or The Incredible Hulk right there in person. We thought it was a great idea too, and so we created the Marvel Super Hero Personal Appearance Program.

Needless to say, the program became an instant hit! Among the many highlights are Marvel Super Heroes and Villains going to the White House, and Spider-Man appearing as the official spokesperson for the National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse. In 1990, Captain America added his support to the FBI Anti-Drug Program, and for several years now local charities and community fund-raising efforts all across the country have had our characters help them raise money for needy causes. Since we keep the personal appearances fee as affordable as possible, the Marvel Super Heroes are often the stars of shopping mall and major retail store special events—not to mention "meet and greets" at comic book shops, and even birthday parties! Each year the demand keeps getting more fierce.

There are many reasons for the success of the Marvel Personal Appearance Program. One reason for its success is that Alyson and Barbara work closely with each event representative to ensure that every personal appearance detail is taken care of, but perhaps the biggest reason justly goes to the actors and actresses who portray our heroes and villains. As you know, it takes more than just a costume to be Spidey or Cap. The actors and actresses lucky enough to be tapped to be our characters know this. In fact, quite a few of them are fans of our comics—one reason they leaped at the chance to audition. As for those who didn't start out as fans, after reading a few adventures of the characters they were asked to portray, they were also hooked! The result is that fans not only get to see their favorite Marvel Super Hero or Villain, but can also challenge each character to an impromptu game of Marvel Trivia.

Now even though our heroes and villains are going to be seen in more places than ever before, there are still lots of places they can go—like to visit you! That's why we're offering a personal



appearance special discount available only through MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE. All you or your organization needs to do is fill out the coupon below and send it to Barbara Maier-Hopkins. Barbara will send an information kit detailing everything about the Marvel Super Hero Personal appearance Program. Each personal appearance booked with the MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE coupon will receive a 5% discount on the personal appearance fee — and if it's a comic shop making the request, the shop may even qualify for additional benefits.

So send it in! You'd better do it quickly because the offer expires March 31, 1991.

5% DISCOUNT (Offer Expires March 31, 1991)

SEND TO: Barbara Maier-Hopkins, Special Events Manager
c/o Marvel Comics, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016

Barbara:

Yes, I want to know more about the Marvel Super Heroes Personal Appearance Program! Please send me an information kit and give me a special MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE 5% discount on the personal appearance fee.

NAME: _____

STORE/ORGANIZATION: _____

PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

LIFE, THE MARVEL UNIVERSE® AND EVERYTHING

Send your letters to: MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, c/o Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc., 387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016

Attention correspondents:
All letters to be considered for publication must include your name and address though we will gladly withhold that info by request!

This month's decidedly loopy letter column title comes to us straight from Toby, a Canadian cat from Richmond, BC who really knows where his towel is. Thanks, Toby! As for everyone else out there, don't panic! We still need a natty new title for this column each and every month. So give it some thought and send those ideas in! If we use one of them, we'll even print your name right here in glorious black and white. It may not be a free dinner at the Resturant at the End of the Marvel Universe, but it still ain't bad!

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

I have been collecting comics for over a year and a half. My favorite artists and writers are Ron Lim, Todd McFarlane, Dale Keown, Jim Lee, Chris Claremont, Erik Larsen, John Romita Jr., Jack Kirby, and just about everyone else at Marvel. Now I would like to ask you a few questions:

1. Who is Galactus, and is he good or evil?
2. What is his relationship with the Silver Surfer?

Until the Silver Surfer goes platinum, make mine Marvel!

Adam Alexander
1828 E. 298 St.
Wickliffe, OH 44902

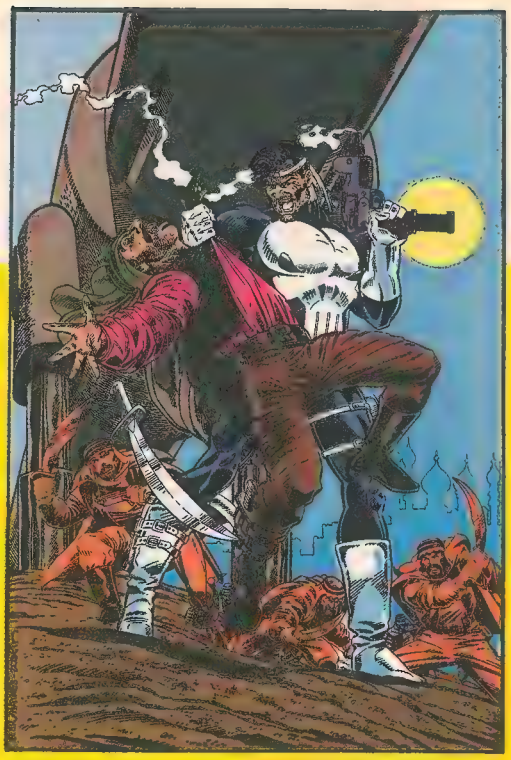
Well Adam, you may want to consult the OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE, which was created to answer tough questions like these, or perhaps check out the recent SILVER SURFER MASTERWORKS edition, so you could get the story first-hand! Then, all would be clear!

However, since you asked your pretty cosmic questions so nicely, I'll take them in order:

1. Galactus is a giant, near-omnipotent being who lives by consuming the energy of living planets (but don't try it at home, kids; we've always found it gives us indigestion). He's threatened the Earth a few times, but has been turned away by the likes of the Fantastic Four, The Mighty Thor and others. As for whether he's good or evil, well, that probably depends upon whom you ask. Galactus probably wouldn't consider himself evil since he's just doing what he has to do to survive, but we bet that the inhabitants of the planets he's consumed would disagree. As the Watcher said,

'way back in the story that introduced Galactus: "He is above mere good and evil! He is—Galactus!"

2. Actually, the relationship is pretty close. You see, when Galactus planned to consume the planet Zenn-La, one of the local natives, Norrin Radd, tried to convince him to leave the planet in peace. Galactus agreed, on one condition: that Norrin Radd serve him as a herald. And so, Galactus granted Norrin vast cosmic powers, transforming him into the star-spanning, slightly shiny Silver Surfer!



Say, there's that sunny yellow background again! Which means that either the corn is as high as an elephant's eye, or it's time for our LETTER OF THE MONTH! Yup, once again, we've burrowed through our mountains of mail to select a couple of letters that we think will be of particular interest to Marvelites hither and yon, and we've placed them against a sunny yellow background, as befits their position.

This time around, we've chosen two letters about a topic that's on a whole lotta people's minds right now. And for once, our yellow background might actually be better served by a yellow ribbon . . .

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

I am a soldier in the United States Army. I am part of Operation Desert Shield. I would like you to print my name in your magazine so people can write me and be my pen pal. My favorite comic books are THE AVENGERS, CAPTAIN AMERICA, and THOR.

Thank you.

PFC Roger O. Castillo
535-02-1335
A-Btry 3/8 FA
APO NY 09657

No, Roger—thank you!

To whom it may concern,

I read somewhere that Marvel shipped free comics overseas to the troops during the Vietnam War. If this is true, I think it was a great thing for you to do.

Could you please tell me more about this and do you plan to send some over to the troops in the Middle East?

Until Saddam Hussein joins the G.I. JOE team, make mine Marvel.

Jeff Allen
(Address withheld by request)
Sarnia, Ontario
Canada

Okay, time to get serious for a minute.

This column is being written on the night of January 16, about two hours after hostilities broke out in the Middle East. All of the television stations are maintaining continuous coverage of the events, and in a few minutes, the President is going to be addressing the nation. Considering that things are pretty scary here, where we're safe, we can't even imagine what it's like for the troops in the Middle East.

Obviously, we wish that folks like Roger were still home, but we do respect them for doing what they have to do. We hope that a whole bunch of you out there will write to him; we have a hunch that he (and his fellow soldiers) could use the support right about now. And yes, Jeff, we (and many other comics publishers) have sent books to the American forces in the Middle East . . . and you can, too. Comic books are being shipped to our forces through an effort called Operation Comics Shield. If you have any comic books that you'd like to contribute to the effort, you can send them to:

Any Service Member
Operation Desert Storm
FPO
New York, NY 09866-0006

We hope that this war will be a short one, that it will claim few casualties, and that our troops will be home again before this column sees print. Unfortunately though, life isn't always like the comics.

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

I cannot begin to describe to you how much I enjoyed MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #96. As usual, the issue was extremely informative and most entertaining.

The best part of the whole thing was the Marvel Trivia Quiz. Like always, it revealed important and sometimes obscure information, this time about Elektra. However, imagine my surprise when I read question #12 and discovered that I was the principal man in Elektra's life during her "lost years"!

You know, I always felt that there were times in my life where I just didn't

know what was going on, and I would like to thank MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE for finally letting me in on some of this stuff.

John Garrett
Trever Hall #428
815 S. South St.
Lawrence University
Appelton, WI 54911

You're welcome, John. So, how are things over at S.H.I.E.L.D. these days?

Y'know old buddy, after reading the ELEKTRA: ASSASSIN Limited Series a couple of years back, we can understand why you sometimes don't think you know what's going on in your life. Hope things have settled down a tad!

Dear Guys,

I just saw your new line of action figures at my local mall. As a matter of fact, I bought one of each character! I thought they were terrific!

And then, I had a thought: How about a monthly column on the toys and action figures you have made in the past? You could go into detail about the great Mego characters that were made, and what about that terrific line of characters that was made for your Secret Wars collection?

I think it would be a fun column that a lot of people would like. What do you think?

Rick Blair
207 Big Oak Dr.
Franklin, PA 16323

Actually, Rick, we do cover toys and action figures in our annual gift giving sections during the holiday season. You may have also noticed the occasional items about toys in our Mondo Marvel section, as well as our new feature column on Marvel Merchandising. Although this month's piece featured Marvel's Personal Appearance Program, numerous articles on computer games and our line of PVC figures have also ran. Thanks much for writing though, we love to hear any ideas you Marvelites may have to offer. As we've said before, we can't do it without you!

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

Years ago I had a best friend with whom I shared my most sacred days of comics collecting with. Over the years, we have both fallen out of touch with each other. His name is Martin Hogan, and he lived up the street from me in Richmond, California. We both attended Woodrow Wilson Elementary School, and played super heroes, Godzilla and Gammara on the playground nearly every day.

Unfortunately, in 1975, my Dad decided to move to a farm in Minnesota because of all the crime in the "Big City." So we moved, and I didn't like it. I eventually got over it.

Martin and I kept in contact from 1976 to 1984. The last time I spoke with him, he was living in San Bernardino, California, and I was planning to go out there and visit him after fifteen long years. Our plans fell through in late 1984, and I have no way to get in contact with him at all.

Hopefully, Martin is reading this letters page right now and will get in contact with me ASAP. I am also sending this to several other comics that I pray he still reads. With a little luck, I may hear from him shortly. Thanks in advance.

Lyndon Baines Johnson
1721 Selby Ave. #1
St. Paul, MN 55104-6151

No problem, Lyndon. Good luck in tracking down your friend! And if anybody out there happens to know Martin, you might want to pass the message along to him just in case he didn't see this column himself.

Boy, this whole thing just warms your heart, doesn't it? Well, bringing friends together is what MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE is all about! Or was that Jessica Hahn's Love Line. . .?

Well, in any case, we couldn't ask for a better segue to introduce this month's MARVEL CORRESPONDENTS! Once again, we've pulled together a passel of personable people who are looking for new friends with whom they can share a meaningful correspondence and possibly the occasional game of Twister. Go ahead and drop one or two of them a line! As Kang the Conqueror might put it, "There's no time like the present!"

ANSWERS TO MARVEL® TRIVIA QUIZ

1. B	5. A	9. B
2. A	6. B	10. A
3. C	7. A	11. C
4. A	8. A	12. C

MARVEL® CORRESPONDENTS

If you'd like to be listed in this space yourself, simply send your name, address, age and the titles of your three favorite Marvel Comics to the address listed way back at the top of this column. See? What could be easier—except maybe preventing Thanos from destroying the known universe?

Garry Zacheiss
30 New York Ave.
Bergenfield, NJ 07621
Age: 9
Favorites: DP7, PSI FORCE, EXCALIBUR

Craig Fraser
23 Riversdale Road
Upper Hutt
New Zealand
Age: 19
Favorites: X-MEN, NEW MUTANTS, MARSHAL LAW

Dick Dothager
Rt. 3, Box 92BB
Vine Grove, KY 40175
Favorites: IRON MAN, AVENGERS, DAREDEVIL

Travis O'Neill
9211 Burgoo King Road
Valley Station, KY 40272
Age: 18
Favorites: X-MEN, FANTASTIC FOUR, NEW MUTANTS

Sean Hall
10220 Frailey Road
Berlin Heights, OH 44814
Age: 15
Favorites: PUNISHER, DAREDEVIL, MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS

Andrew Malone
623 Roosevelt Ave.
Lindenhurst, NY 11757
Age: 11
Favorites: WEST COAST AVENGERS, SPIDER-MAN, FANTASTIC FOUR

Dody
Bungur II Rt. 006/02
No. 11 Keb-lama
Jakarta, 12240
Indonesia

Colby Morrill
R.R. #1, Box 2130
Fairfax, VT 05454
Age: 12
Favorites: X-MEN, X-FACTOR, AVENGERS

Anthony Chaoe
2805 Quacco Road
Savannah, GA 31419
Age: 13
Favorites: SPEEDBALL, SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN, TRANSFORMERS

Michael McCarthy
62 Hampson Street
Dracut, MA 01826
Age: 15
Favorites: All mutant titles, All Avengers titles, Alpha Flight

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THE 1991 MARVEL AGE® CALENDAR

MARCH

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ARTIST: RON ZALME
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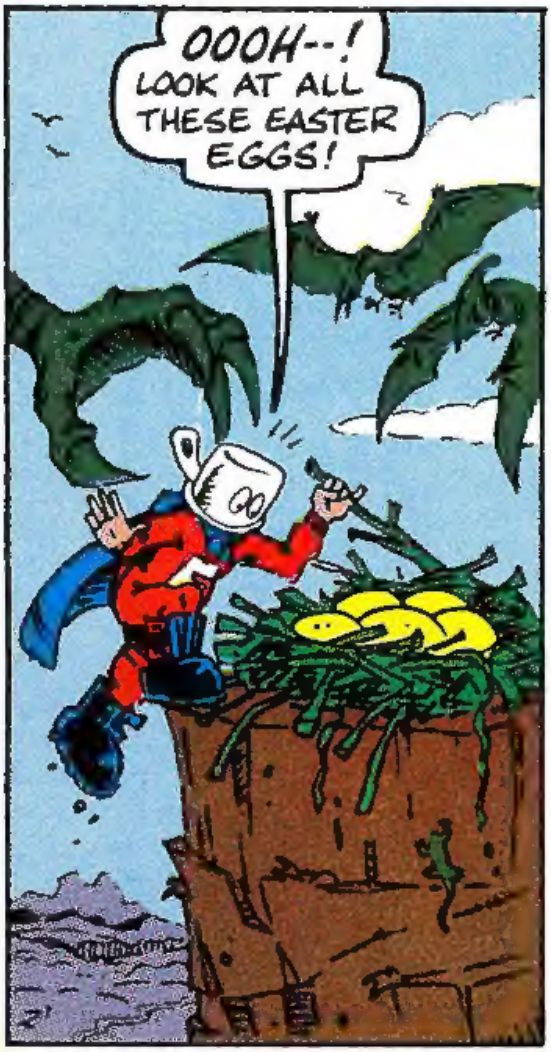

WEDNESDAY
THURSDAY
FRIDAY
SATURDAY
LIKE A... NIGHTCAT?!
YOU GOT IT, SWEETIE.
...AND GOES OUT LIKE A SPIDER-HAM!
1 IT'S X-LETTERER, TOM ORZECHOWSKI'S B-DAY!
IT'S HOLLYWOOD SUPERSTAR, MARK EVANIER'S BIRTHDAY!
2
HAPPY B-DAY, "ARTSY" AL MILGROM!
6
7
THE WATCHER'S NEW JOB.
9
WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME?!
DON'T WALK
8
GOLIATH DOWN, THOU LOOKEST TIRED!
13
BY CROM! IT'S MIKE DECARLO'S DAY OF BORNING!
14
IT'S SUPER-EDITOR BOB BUDIANSKY'S B-DAY!
15
HAPPY BIRTHDAY, TODD McFARLANE
SILVER EDITION
THOR AS A KID...
20
SON, I TOLD YOU, DON'T THROW LIGHTNING BOLTS IN THE HOUSE!
TOMORROW IS JOHN ROMITA'S SECRETARY, CHRIS AURILIA'S B-DAY!
22
HE'S OUT.
IT'S OUR DIRECTOR OF MERCHANDISING AND PROMOTION DENYCE BUCK'S BIRTHDAY!
GO GET IT, BOY!
27
YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING.
I SAID, "GO GET IT!"
28
HE WASN'T KIDDING.
LET'S WISH MARC SILVESTRI A HAPPY B-DAY!
29
BUB.
TOMORROW IS RECEPTIONIST, ERIE MITCHELL'S BIRTHDAY.
30
YOU CAN'T GET IN WITHOUT AN APPOINTMENT.